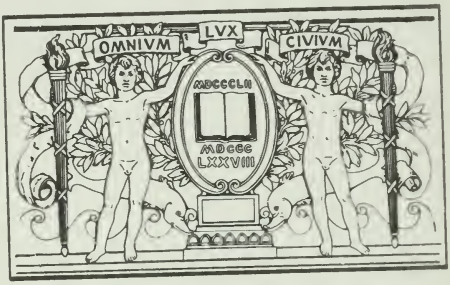
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CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

EDITED
BY
SIR A. W. WARD
AND
A. R. WALLER

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PREFATORY NOTE

The Cambridge History of English Literature was first published between the years 1907 and 1916. The General Index Volume was issued in 1927.

In the preface to Volume I the general editors explained their intentions. They proposed to give a connected account of the successive movements of English literature, to describe the work of writers both of primary and of secondary importance, and to discuss the interaction between English and foreign literatures. They included certain allied subjects such as oratory, scholarship, journalism and typography, and they did not neglect the literature of America and the British Dominions. The History was to unfold itself, "unfettered by any preconceived notions of artificial eras or controlling dates," and its judgments were not to be regarded as final.

This reprint of the text and general index of the *History* is issued in the hope that its low price may make it easily available to a wider circle of students and other readers who wish to have on their shelves the full story of English literature.

CAMBRIDGE
1932

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CHAPTER I

SIR WALTER SCOTT

LIKE Burns, Scott is, in his way, an anomaly in English literature. Both as poet and novelist, he bore the badge of singularity. It was as poet that he made his first appeal to the world, and his poetic tendencies were not directly inspired by modern English verse. In matter and manner, if not in metrical form, his poetry has as little kinship with that of his immediate English predecessors as has the verse of Burns. His relations are more intimate with ancient, than with modern, bards, though not with the same bards as Burns; and, like him, he is very specifically —though not so peculiarly and completely—Scottish. His immense interest in the Scottish past represents a phase of the reaction against the ecclesiastical obsession of previous generations. With the advent of the reformation, Scotland's interest in her secular past was, for a long time, almost extinguished. Even the memories of Bannockburn and of her stern struggles for national independence became obscured by the new protestant alliance with England; while her catholic past acquired, in the eyes of the majority of the nation, a kind of criminal aspect from its supposed association with a long period of 'idolatry' and spiritual decline. One of the most marked features of the Scottish literary revival of the eighteenth century was the awakened interest in her secular past. This was further accentuated by the romantic, though futile, Jacobite risings. Scott inherited strong Jacobite partialities, and, through his father and others, was brought into close contact with Jacobite traditions, while the feats of his old border ancestry captivated the imagination of his early childhood. Interest in the past, and specially in the feudal and chivalric past, was the predominant inspiration of his verse; and conferred on it a marked dissimilarity from that of his immediate predecessors.

As a novelist, his distinctiveness largely depends, also, on his historic and antiquarian enthusiasms. Here, it is true, his relations with his immediate literary predecessors were much more intimate. Though his tales derive something of their romantic flavour from his familiarity with the older romance writers—both in prose and verse—he was also much advantaged by the antecedence of the great eighteenth century novelists and later and lesser novelists. He himself described Fielding as 'the father of the English novel'; he had a very strong admiration for Smollett; and he also confessed that, but for the success attained by Maria Edgeworth in her Irish tales, he might never have thought of attempting a novel of Scottish life. His prefaces to Ballantyne's *Novelists' Library*, also, show, as Lockhart remarks, 'how profoundly he had investigated the principles and practices of those masters before he struck out a new path for himself.' But, while more dependent as novelist than as poet on the stimulus and guidance of his modern predecessors, he was a much greater, a much more outstanding, novelist than poet. Here, he discovered his true literary vocation. Here, he found scope for a more complete and varied exercise of his special accomplishments and genius; and, great as were the merits of his chief eighteenth century predecessors, he was able to compass achievements, in some essential respects markedly different from theirs, and, at the same time, so comprehensive and many-sided as to confer on him a peculiar lustre.

The special literary development of Scott, while the consequence of a rare combination of natural gifts, was, also, largely influenced by certain exceptional circumstances which gave it its original impulse and did much to determine its character. He owed not a little to his Edinburgh nativity and citizenship. His 'own romantic town,' uniquely picturesque and variously associated with pregnant memories of the past, was an exceptionally suitable cradle for his genius. Long familiarity never lessened its fascination for him.

> 'No funeral hearse,' writes Lockhart, 'crept more leisurely than did his landau up the Canongate or Cowgate, and not a queer tottering gable but recalled to him some long-buried memory of splendour or bloodshed, which, by a few words, he set before the hearer in the reality of life. His image is so associated in my mind with the antiquities of his native place that I cannot now revisit them without feeling as if I were treading on his gravestone.'

He was also favoured, in no small degree, by his border descent and prepossessions and an early literary nurture on border tales and ballads. It was this that gave the first impulse and direction to his poetic genius; and it formed, in a sense, the basis of his future literary achievements. His interest in the stirring border past was awakened in his early childhood principally by the vivid reminiscences of his grandmother, 'in whose youth,' he says, 'the old border depredations were matter of recent tradition,' and who used to tell him 'many a tale of Watt of Harden, Wight Willie of Aikwood and Jamie Telfer of the Fair Dodhead and other heroes—merry men all of the persuasion and calling of Robin Hood and little John.' The solitary condition of his childhood, caused by his lameness, begat, also, precocious literary proclivities which, otherwise, might have lain much longer in abeyance, or might have been largely obstructed by his strong partiality for outdoor activities. It made him, as he modestly puts it, 'a tolerable reader,' his enthusiasm, he remarks, being 'chiefly awakened by the wonderful and the terrible,' 'the common taste,' he adds, 'of children but in which I have remained a child unto this day.' In this respect, however, he was no more an ordinary child than he was an ordinary man. The stories he read produced an exceptionally deep impression on him, and called into early exercise his imaginative faculty. While he was still at the High school of Edinburgh, his tales, on days when play was made impossible by the severity of the weather, used 'to assemble an admiring audience round Lucky Brown's fire side'; and his interest in the marvellous became rather more than less absorbing as he approached manhood. After he became a legal apprentice in his father's office, his strong predilection for 'romantic lore' caused him to spend a portion of his earnings on attendance twice a week at an Italian class, and, for the same reason, he 'renewed and extended' his 'knowledge of the French language.' Later, he was accustomed, every Saturday in summer, and, also, during holidays, to retire with a friend to one of the neighbouring heights, where, perched in solitude, they read together 'romances of Knight errantry, the *Castle of Otranto*, Spenser, Ariosto and Boiardo being great favourites.' He, also, he tells us, 'fastened like a tiger upon every collection of old songs and romances' which chanced to fall in his way; and had a wonderful faculty of retaining in his memory whatever pleased him, 'above all a Border ballad.'

While it was by the border tales and ballads that his romantic ardour was first aroused, it was, also, his ballad enthusiasm that induced him to make his first venture in publication; and, in ballad composition and translation, in ballad collection, annotation and amendment, he served a literary apprenticeship which proved to be of cardinal advantage to him both as poet and as novelist. Shortly after he left the High school, his interest in old ballads received an abiding stimulus from bishop Percy's *Reliques of Ancient Poetry,* which he read, he says, 'with a delight which may be imagined but cannot be described.' It was their romantic stimulus that roused his curiosity about the old romantic poetry not only of England but of France and Italy; and, through his German studies, begun in 1792, his ballad fervour received further quickening by his introduction to the modern balladry of German poets, whose interest in this form of verse was, also, first aroused by the *Reliques* of Percy.

In the same year in which he began his German studies, he had, under the guidance of sheriff substitute Shortreed, made the first of his seven successive annual raids into the wild and primitive district of Liddesdale, to explore the remains of old castles and peels, to pick up such samples as were obtainable of 'the ancient riding ballads,' to collect other relics of antiquity and to enjoy 'the queerness and the fun' associated with the rough hospitality of those unsophisticated regions. The special attention he was now directing to the old minstrelsy of the borders quickened and enlightened his appreciation of modern German balladry, his interest in which was first awakened in 1794, through the reports of Mrs Barbauld's recital, in the house of Dugald Stewart, of Taylor's translation of Bürger's *Leonore.* Moved by the eulogies of several who had listened to it, he obtained from Hamburg a copy of Bürger's works, when, he tells us, the perusal of the ballad in German 'rather exceeded,' than disappointed, his expectations. In his enthusiasm, he immediately promised a friend a verse translation of it, which, in 1796, he published in a thin quarto along with that of *Der wilde Jäger.* For his own gratification, he then 'began,' he says, 'to translate on all sides,' but, while the dramas of Goethe, Schiller and others 'powerfully attracted him'—so much so that, in 1799, he published a translation of Goethe's *Goetz von Berlichingen*—the ballad poetry, he affirms, was his 'favourite.' He was affected mainly by a particular form or aspect of the German romantic movement. It appealed to him so far as it harmonised with predilections which had been created independently of it. It widened and deepened his previous interest in the chivalric past and the marvels and *diablerie* of tradition, but he had nothing in common with its metaphysical, mystical and extravagant tendencies. It was more especially to its balladry that he was indebted, and this chiefly for directing his attention more distinctly and seriously to this form of verse, and causing him to essay experiments which were a kind of preparation for the accomplishment of his poetical romances. From the translation of German ballads, he acquired, he says, sufficient confidence to attempt the imitation of them. In his experiments, he now, also, received encouragement and counsel from 'Monk' Lewis, his acquaintanceship with whom 'rekindled effectually,' he says, in his breast, 'the spark of poetical ambition,' and to whom he was indebted for salutary corrections of his careless tendencies in regard to rime and diction, partly caused by his familiarity with the rude ballads of tradition. Lewis accepted certain of his ballads for his projected *Tales of Wonder*, which, however, did not appear until 1801; and, owing to the delay in the publication of the volume, Scott induced his old schoolfellow James Ballantyne, who had a printer's business at Kelso, to throw off, in 1799, a dozen copies of his own ballads, which, in pamphlet form, and under the title *Apology for Tales of Terror*, he distributed among his more intimate Edinburgh friends.

This small pamphlet was the beginning of business relations with Ballantyne which were to exercise a cardinal influence both on Ballantyne's and on Scott's fortunes. So pleased was Scott with this specimen of his friend's press that he promised to him the printing of a volume of old border ballads, should such a project take shape. It not only did so, but in a more comprehensive and elaborate form than he had at first contemplated. While it was still under consideration, he received, in 1799, an appointment to the sheriffdom of Selkirkshire. This marked a still more important turning-point in his life. It determined his permanent local connection with the border; and, meanwhile, it multiplied his opportunities for the acquisition of old border lore and for augmenting his topographical knowledge of the district. An acquaintanceship now formed with Richard Heber, also, greatly aided him in his medieval studies; and he received valuable suggestions from the remarkable young borderer, John Leyden, to whom, and, also, to William Laidlaw, his future steward, and to James Hogg, he was further indebted for several ballad versions. The collection appeared in 1802 in two volumes; and a third volume, which included ballad imitations by himself, Lewis and others, was published in 1803. In subsequent editions, changes were made in the ballad texts, by way both of amendment and of additions, the arrangement was altered and the notes were improved and supplemented. Though entitled *Minstrelsy of the*

Scottish Border, it included ballads and other pieces which had no special connection with the borders either of Scotland or England. According to Motherwell, forty-three poems were published for the first time; but a few of these were forgeries by Surtees; some were not properly ballads; several had appeared as broadsides; and others were accessible in manuscript collections. Nearly all those detailing border feats or incidents, or misfortunes, were, however, previously unknown outside the border communities; and it is to Scott and his coadjutors that we are indebted for the rescue from gradual oblivion of such fragments and rude versions of them as were still retained in vanishing tradition. Most of the versions published by Scott were of a composite character. Unlike Percy, he obtained several traditional copies—often differing widely in phraseology—of most of the ballads; and he constructed his versions partly by selecting what he deemed the best reading of each; partly by amending the more debased diction, or the halting rhythm, or the imperfect rime, partly by the fabrication of lines, and even stanzas, to replace omissions, or enhance the dramatic effect of the ballad. In some cases, as in that of *Kinmont Willie*, fragmentary recitals were merely utilised as little more than suggestions for the construction of what was practically a new ballad, inspired by their general tenor; and large portions of other ballads, as in the striking instance of *Otterbourne*, were very much a mere amalgam of amended and supplemented lines and phrases, welded into poetic unity and effectiveness by his own individual art. The publication of *Minstrelsy* led, gradually, to a more critical enquiry into the genesis and diffusion of the ancient ballad. By collecting several versions of many ballads and preserving them at Abbotsford, Scott helped to supply data towards this enquiry; while his introductions and notes tended to awaken a more scientific curiosity as to the sources of ballad themes, the connection of the ballad with old tales and superstitions and its relation to other forms of ancient literature.

The reconstruction and amendment of old ballads brought Scott still more completely under the spell of the ancient Scottish past, and, also, helped not a little to discipline and enrich his poetic art. Little more than the rudiments of poetic art were manifested in his earlier ballad imitations. While, like the ballads of Bürger, they suffer from a too close endeavour to reproduce the form and spirit of the ancient ballad, they, also, though displaying glimpses of poetic power, are often a little rough and uneven in their style and expression; and, while they come short of the dramatic force and vividness of Bürger's ballads, they manifest nothing of the modern creative adaptation of the ancient ballad art brilliantly displayed in the ballads of Schiller and Goethe. But, what we have specially to notice is that they contain nothing comparable to the best stanzas of the amended *Minstrelsy* versions, and that none of them possesses the condensed tragic effectiveness of, for example, his own short ballad *Albert Graeme* in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805).

The production of this long romantic poem was the more immediately important consequence of Scott's ballad studies. It may almost be described as a kind of prolonged and glorified border ballad. While on the outlook for a subject which might be made the theme of a romance, 'treated with the simplicity and wildness of an ancient ballad,' he received from the countess of Dalkeith a border legend of Gilpin Horner, with the suggestion that he might compose a ballad on it. He had then just finished the editing of the old metrical romance *Sir Tristrem,* and he had also been much struck by the casual recital to him of Coleridge's *Christabel,* as yet unpublished. What he, therefore, at first contemplated was, according to Lockhart,

> to throw the story of Gilpin into a somewhat similar cadence, so that he might produce such an echo of the late metrical romance as would serve to connect his conclusion of the primitive *Sir Tristrem* with his imitation of the common popular ballad in *The Gray Brother* and *The Eve of St John.*

But, when he began shaping the story, it assumed, partly through the hints and suggestions of friends, the form of a romance divided into cantos, sung or recited by an aged minstrel to the duchess of Buccleugh and her ladies in the state room of Newark castle.

The resort to the minstrel—whose personality, circumstances, temperament and moods are finely indicated in sympathetic stanzas at the beginning of the poem and, incidentally, between the cantos—was a specially happy inspiration. The poem being a minstrel recitation, a certain minstrel simplicity is maintained throughout; and, while an antique charm thus pervades its general method and manner, the recitation is preserved from the monotony of the old romances by substituting for the archaic romance stanzas an irregular and plastic metrical form. This 'mescolanza of measures,' as Scott terms it, was previously known to him as used by Anthony Hall, Anstey, Wolcot and others. He was indebted to Coleridge for the suggestion of its adaptability to more serious narrative verse; but *The Lay*, apart from the metre, has little in common with the fantastic fairy romance of *Christabel.* The rhythmical advantage of the metrical scheme consists in the fact that the length of the line is determined not by syllables but by accents. While it is limited to four accents, the number of the syllables may vary from seven to twelve. In a long narrative poem this, in itself, was a great antidote to monotony; and with it was conjoined the intermixture of couplet stanzas with others in which the couplet is varied with alternate or woven rime. In the case of Scott, the use of the metrical scheme was modified by the influence of the old ballad verse, of the old romance stanzas and of the verse forms of the old Scottish poets, which conferred, imperceptibly, perhaps, to himself, a certain antique flavour on the form, as well as the substance, of his poem. From the immense poetic licence which this 'mescolanza of measures' affords, success in its use, even in a strictly metrical sense, depends, also, in a very special way, on the independent individual art of the poet.

The goblin pranks of Gilpin Horner were declared by Jeffrey to be the capital deformity of the poem; but, if these interludes add neither to its poetic nor romantic charm, they are (a point overlooked by the adverse critics) an essential part of what plot there is, since the combat which forms the climax of the poem depends upon the decoying of young Buccleugh and his falling into English hands. Again, the goblin story was Scott's original theme; and he could hardly have paid a more appropriate compliment to the lady to whom he was indebted for it than by making it the occasion of creating the series of striking episodes which he has linked with the annals of the house of Scott. The sequence of old border scenes and incidents is elaborated with an admirable combination of antique lore, clan enthusiasm and vividly picturesque art. Necessarily, the presentation is a selective, a poetical, a more or less idealised, one. The ruder and harsher aspects of the old border life are ignored. Apart, also, from imaginary occurrences, some liberty has been taken with historical facts, and the chronology, here and there, is a little jumbled; but, the main point is that the poetic tale, while reasonably accordant with known facts, is, on the whole, instinct with imaginative efficacy and artistic charm. While Scott's border prepossessions may, as has been objected, have enticed him, here and there, into details that are *caviare* to the general reader—and it may be granted that the prosaic recital of the savage combat by which the

Scotts of Eskdale won their land is an irrelevant interruption of the main story—these 'local partialities,' though not quite excusable, are not prominent enough strongly to offend, as Jeffrey feared, 'the readers of the poem in other parts of the empire.' Again, though certain critics may be so far right in pronouncing canto VI a kind of superfluity—for the fine description of the wailing music of the harper's requiem would have formed an admirable conclusion—the superfluity may well be forgiven in the case of a canto including, to mention nothing further, the rapturous pathetic invocation with which it opens, the consummately successful ballad adaptation *Albert Graeme*, the more elaborately beautiful song of the English bard Fitztraver, the graphic and pathetic *Rosabelle* and the pilgrim mass in Melrose abbey, with the impressive English version of *Dies Irae*.

Scott himself says that 'the force in *The Lay* is thrown on style, in *Marmion* on description'; but the dictum must be interpreted in a somewhat loose sense. Notwithstanding many felicities and beauties, the style in *The Lay*, as in *Marmion*, is often careless. Owing, partly, to his overflowing energy and his emotional absorption in his subject, of which he was practically master before he began to write, he was a great, an almost matchless, improvisator; he created his impression more by the ardour and vividness of his presentation than by the charm of a subtle and finished art. *The Lay* being, however, his first poetic venture on a large scale, he necessarily had to give special attention to its poetic form and manner, and this all the more because it was a quite novel kind of poetic venture. He had to devise a metrical scheme for it, and, having elected that the story should be told by a minstrel, he had to preserve throughout a certain minstrel directness and simplicity. But, if *The Lay* be more carefully written than *Marmion*, it is rather more archaic and not so directly potent. Notwithstanding *The Lay's* pleasant antique flavour and the quaintly interesting personality of the minstrel—for whom the introductory epistles to each canto of *Marmion*, however excellent in themselves, are by no means a happy substitute—*Marmion* has the advantage of being less imitative and artificial in its manner and more unrestrainedly effective. The metrical scheme is a kind of modification of that of *The Lay*. The rhythm is less irregular, the couplets being generally octosyllabic; and couplets bulk more largely than interwoven stanzas, the former being usually employed for the simple narrative, and the latter for the more descriptive passages. *Marmion*, also, conjures up a more striking, varied and pregnant series of scenes than does *The Lay.* The past depicted is not specifically a border, but a partly Scottish and partly English, past. As he himself tells us, it is an attempt 'to paint the manners of feudal times on a broader scale and in the course of a more interesting story.' The love story—though, so far as concerns Constance, a far from pleasant one—is more poignantly interesting; and the story to which it is subordinate, the tragic national story of Flodden, is more profoundly moving than *The Lay's* chivalric combat. Lord Marmion, whose love concerns, diplomatic errand and final fate are the ostensible theme of the poem, is not, however, a very convincing or coherent portrait. 'The combination of mean felony with so many noble qualities in the character of the hero'—however well it may have served to give occasion for the admirable pictures of the past which are the poem's most conspicuous feature—is, as Lockhart admits, 'the main blot in the poem.' It is a more serious blot than are the pranks of the goblin page in *The Lay.* It especially detracts from the poetic effectiveness of his death-scene, for the reader resents the distinction thus conferred on the double-hearted hero by the glowing and minute account of his individual fate when cardinal national issues are hanging in the balance. While the fortunes of Lord Marmion are, ostensibly, the main theme of the poem, he is, however, introduced merely to afford opportunity to paint the manners of the time in the year of Flodden. They are shown to us in association with the castle, the convent, the inn, the court, the camp and the battle. The force, as Scott says, is laid on description. The poem is very much a series of vivid kaleidoscopic scenes. It may suffice to mention the exquisite prospect of Norham castle illuminated by the setting sun; the description of Marmion's approach to it; the presentation of the voyage of the Whitby nuns along the rock-bound Durham and Northumbrian coasts to St Cuthbert's holy isle; the trial and doom of Constance by the heads of the three convents in 'the dread vault' of Lindisfarne; the inn interior of the olden time with its host and guests; the approach towards Lord Marmion from the woodland shade of the lion king Sir David Lyndsay, on his milk-white palfrey, attended by his heralds and pursuivants on their prancing steeds and all clothed in their gorgeous heraldic bravery; the picture of the mighty mass of Crichton castle dominating 'the green vale of Tyne'; and the presentation of the white pavilions of the great and motley Scottish army on the Borough muir backed by the turrets and rocky heights of Edinburgh and the shining expanse of the firth of Forth. But the great descriptive triumph of the poem is the dramatic picture of the stress and tumult and varying fortunes of the Flodden conflict, to the last heroic stand of the Scots and their flight across the Tweed in the gathering darkness. With the description of the morrow's battlefield and of the discovery of the king's body, the poem might well have ended; for the story of Lord Marmion's burial, of Wilton's feats and of Clara's happy marriage is rather an anticlimax.

While, in *The Lay*, the force, according to Scott, is laid on style, and, in *Marmion*, on description, in *The Lady of the Lake* (1810) it is laid on incident. The poem sets before us an almost continuous succession of exciting occurrences. It is not so much a re-creation of the past as a stirring recital of hazards and adventures. Nevertheless, it is as picturesquely descriptive as either of its two predecessors; and, apart from the vividly coloured incidents, it gains a special charm from the wild and enchanting scenery which forms their setting. The detailed obtrusiveness of the scenery has been objected to as too guidebook-like; but what would the poem, as a poem, be apart from the matchless reproduction of the scenery's enchantment? It was, in fact, the deep impression made on Scott by the mingled loveliness and wild grandeur of the loch Katrine region that suggested to him to make it the scene of such a theme. 'This poem,' he says, 'the action of which lay among scenes so beautiful and so deeply impressed on my recollection, was a labour of love.'

Each canto begins with one or more Spenserian stanzas, mainly of an invocatory character; and, except for the interpolated songs or bard recitals, he confines himself, throughout his tale, almost wholly to the octosyllabic couplet. This has met with some disapproval; but the rapid succession of exciting incidents tends to prevent the monotony of effect that might have been felt in the case of a less animated narrative, the poem being almost destitute of such irksome passages as have been commented on in the case of its predecessors. It is the most uniformly and vividly entertaining of the three poems, and was, and seems destined to be, the most popular. If it cannot be termed great poetry, it is, for most readers, a very fascinating poetic tale. Though it may even verge, occasionally, on rodomontade, though its representations of personalities are rather slight and superficial and, in some instances, a little stagey, there is irresistible spirit and verve in the depiction of its incidents and much poetic charm in the arrangement of their setting. As for the interpolated songs, some, intended to represent the more voluminous improvisations of the highland bards, are but fairly successful Ossianic imitations; but the song of Ellen, *Rest, Warrior, Rest,* is a true romantic inspiration; ardent clan loyalty is consummately blended with savage warrior sentiment in the boat chorus *Hail to the Chief*; and it would be difficult to overpraise the condensed passion of the *coronach.*

Of *Rokeby* (1813), Scott wrote to Ballantyne: 'I hope the thing will do, chiefly because the world will not expect from me a poem of which the interest turns upon character.' Of Bertram, the lusty villain of the poem, he also wrote to Joanna Baillie:

> He is a Caravaggio sketch, which I may acknowledge to you—but tell it not in Gath—I rather pride myself upon, and he is within the keeping of nature, though critics will say to the contrary.

Lockhart questions whether, even in his prose, 'there is anything more exquisitely wrought out as well as fancied than the whole contrast of the two rivals for the love of the heroine in *Rokeby*'; and he also expresses the opinion that 'the heroine herself has a very particular interest in her.' At this, few, perhaps, will be disposed to cavil very much. Scott here gave the world a glimpse of a new aspect of his genius. In none of his previous poetic tales did he direct special attention to the portrayal of character. With the exception of Lord Marmion, who, at least, is an artistic, if not psychological, failure, his personalities are rather loosely sketched; in *Rokeby,* there is a much more elaborate indication of idiosyncrasies. It thus possesses a more pungent human interest than any of the three previous poems; the story, also, is better constructed and it abounds in thrilling and dramatic situations, all well devised and admirably elaborated; on the other hand, it is rather overburdened with mere sordidness and deficient in the finer elements of romance; it has neither the antique charm of *The Lay,* nor the national appeal of *Marmion,* nor the captivating singularity of *The Lady of the Lake.* Of the scenery, Scott says, 'it united the romantic beauties of the wilds of Scotland and the rich and smiling aspect of the southern portion of the island.' And he had bestowed immense care on mastering its characteristic features; but, superior in rich, natural charms as is this Yorkshire country to most of southern Scotland, it lacks the mingled grandeur and bewitching loveliness of the loch Katrine region; and, in *Rokeby* Scott failed to utilise it with anything of the same effectiveness. The incidents of *Rokeby* might have happened anywhere and at any period, as well after any other battle as that of Marston moor. No attempt is made to portray the characteristics of cavaliers or roundheads; and the historic interest of the poem is almost *nil.*

In *The Lord of the Isles* (1818), again, the historic interest is supreme. Its main fault, as a poetic tale, is, in truth, that it is too strictly historical, too much a mere modern reproduction of Barbour's *Bruce.* The lurid Skye episode, however, is recorded with rare impressiveness, and the whole pageantry of the poem is admirably managed. Of the less important romances—*The Vision of Don Roderick* (1811), *The Bridal of Triermain* (1813) and *Harold the Dauntless* (1817)—little need be said. Though the first—founded on a Spanish legend and written on behalf of a fund for the relief of the Portuguese—bears more than the usual signs of hasty composition, the glowing enthusiasm of its martial stanzas largely atones for its minor defects. Of *The Bridal of Triermain,* fragmentary portions appeared in *The Edinburgh Annual Register* for 1813 as an imitation of Scott. By some, they were attributed to William Erskine, afterwards Lord Kinneder, and, at Erskine's request, Scott agreed to complete the tale, on condition that Erskine 'should make no serious effort to disown the composition, if report should lay it at his door.' To aid in the deception, Scott took care 'in several places to mix something which might resemble' his 'friend's feeling and manner'; and we must suppose that this was more particularly attempted in the Lucy introductions. The romance, a wondrous love story of the time of Arthur, is itself, also, in a more gentle and subdued key than is usual with Scott, and the airily graceful story of its scatheless marvels strongly contrasts with the potent and semi-burlesque energy that animates the fierce and fearsome saga, *Harold the Dauntless.*

Little importance attaches to any of Scott's dramatic efforts—*Halidon Hill* (1822), *Macduff's Cross* (1822), *The Doom of Devorgoil* (1830) or *The Tragedy of Auchindrane* (1830)—which but serve to show that his genius or his training unfitted him to excel in this more concise form of imaginative art. As for his poetic romances, they might conceivably have gained by more careful elaboration and considerable condensation; but, on the other hand they might, by such a process, have lost much of their fire and spirit and naïve picturesqueness. Their main charm lies in their vivid presentation of the exciting incidents and wondrous occurrences of former times, in association with their antique environment, with old surviving memorials of the past and with notably characteristic scenery. If their poetry be lacking in condensed effectiveness, in emotional depth and in the more exquisite beauties and splendours of imaginative art, it is generally admirably spirited, and it is almost unmatched for its brilliant pictures of adventure, pageantry and conflict.

But, on the whole, it is, perhaps, as a lyric poet that Scott is seen to best advantage; though, even in Scotland, his lyric greatness has been rather overlooked. Here, he has been overshadowed by Burns, and he hardly deserves to be so. Necessarily, he was not a little indebted to the example of Burns, of whom he was one of the most ardent of admirers, and his minute acquaintance with Johnson's *Musical Museum* is, also, evident. But, if, here, he owes something to Burns, he was, in some respects, a close rival of him. He does not rival him as a love poet; but, if, also, in other respects, a much less voluminous writer of lyrics, he showed, perhaps, a more independent fertility, and his diversity is quite as remarkable. Various examples of his lyric art in his poetic romances have already been quoted; and, scattered throughout his novels, there are, also, many exquisite lyrical fragments and other incidental verse. Such purely English pieces as *Brignal Banks*; *A Weary Lot*; *Rest, Warrior, Rest*; *Allan a Dale*; *County Guy*; *Waken Lords and Ladies Gay*; *Love Wakes and Weeps* and *Young Lochinvar* have no parallel in Burns. Burns was almost devoid of romance—as, indeed, were generally the Scottish vernacular bards—except when, as in *It was a' for our Richtfu' King*, he borrowed the sentiment of a predecessor; nor could he have penned the tenderly mournful *Proud Maisie.* Of Scott's mastery of rollicking humour, we have at least one example in *Donald Caird*; his *Bonnie Dundee*, *Pibroch of Donald Dhu* and *Macgregor's Gathering* are unsurpassed as spirited martial odes; the mournful pathos of old age is finely expressed in *The Sun upon the Weirdlaw Hill*; and Rebecca's hymn *When Israel of the Lord Beloved* is a majestic summary of Jewish faith.

From the time of the publication of *The Lay*, not only had Scott been by far the most popular poet of his time; his popularity was of an unprecedented character. But the great vogue of his verse was, of necessity, temporary. It was occasioned partly by its novelty, supplemented by the general reaction against the cold classicism of the eighteenth century. Furthermore, his verse represented a form of this reaction which appealed, more than any other contemporary verse, to the general reader. It revealed the more attractive aspects of the feudal and chivalric past with elaborate verisimilitude, and set forth its adventures and combats with rare dramatic vividness. But, if these recitals stirred the blood, they but faintly dealt with passion, they hardly appealed to the profounder emotions, they were an unimportant stimulus to thought, they did not very strongly thrill the soul, their romance was mainly of a reminiscent and partly archaic type, their imagination hardly ranged beyond the externals of the past. Excellent of its sort though his verse was, the scope of its influence was, thus, of a limited and superficial character; and, also, it became clear that Scott's vein was exhausted, even before his popularity was eclipsed by that of Byron, who, while partly borrowing his methods, applied them in a much more pungent fashion. Of Byron, Scott himself says: 'He beat me out of the field in description of the stronger passions and in deepseated knowledge of the human heart.' Whatever the exact degree of truth in this modest verdict of Scott, his recognition of his partial eclipse as a poet by Byron was a happy decision both for himself and the world. It definitely induced him to abandon the poetic tale for the novel; and, here, he attained a supremacy which, at least during his own generation, remained unchallenged, and, if, later, it was rivalled, has hardly yet been overthrown. His poetic romances, while originating in certain strong predilections specially fostered from his infancy, represented a mere fraction of his endowments, characteristics and accomplishments. His novels, on the contrary, afforded scope for the full exercise of his uncommon combination of natural gifts and acquirements, for his wholesome humour as well as his comprehensive sympathies, for the utilisation not merely of his historical and antiquarian lore but of his everyday experiences and his varied practical knowledge of human nature. They mirrored the writer himself more exactly and fully than others have been mirrored in their literary productions. On his novels he may be said to have lavished the whole of his mental resources, to have spent the stores of his reflections and observations, and to have bestowed the most precious resources of his extensive erudition.

Before he began his career as novelist, he had reached his forty-third year; and the literary apprenticeship he had served as ballad collector and annotator, and poetic romance writer, was an invaluable preparative for the greater vocation of his late years. It had placed him in close relations with the past; it had kindled, instructed and trained his romantic imagination; it had stored his memory with countless interesting details which were pregnant with suggestions for his fictitious prose narratives and, in various ways, greatly enriched their texture.

Nor is it possible to forget the insight into the spirit and temper of special historical periods acquired by him in the course of other literary undertakings. Among the more important works issued under his editorship were the *Civil War Memoirs* of Sir Henry Slingsby and captain Hodgson (1806); the *Works* of Dryden, with life and elaborate notes, 18 vols. (1808); the *Military Memoirs* (1672—1713) of George Carleton (1808); Sir Robert Cary's *Memoirs* (1808); Somers's *Collection of Tracts,* 13 vols. (1809); *The Life, Letters and State Papers of Sir Ralph Sadler,* 3 vols. (1809); *The Secret History of James I,* 2 vols. (1811); the *Works* of Jonathan Swift with life and notes, 19 vols. (1814); *Memorie of the Somervilles* (1814); and various other works in later years.

In purely historical writings, Scott's imaginative genius found itself somewhat cramped. His *Tales of a Grandfather* (1827—9) only faintly mirror his gift of story-telling. As for his voluminous *Life of Napoleon* (1827), considering the circumstances in which it was written and the rapidity with which it was achieved, it is a remarkable *tour de force*; but it cannot claim to be, in almost any respect, a satisfactory biography. On the other hand, his *Border Antiquities of England and Scotland* (1817) exhibits some of his most characteristic qualities. In compiling it, he gained a very minute mastery of the characteristics of ancient architecture and of the scenic features of a region teeming with ancient martial exploits and exciting adventures. Scott had a very keen eye for the picturesque features of ancient buildings and of their situation and surroundings. While still in his father's office, one of his chief recreations consisted of long country excursions on foot or on horseback, the principal object of which, he says, was 'the pleasure of seeing romantic scenery, or what afforded me at least equal pleasure, the places which had been distinguished by remarkable historical events'; and, though he modestly states that, while none delighted more than he in the general effect of picturesque scenery, he was unable with the eye of a painter to dissect the various parts of the scene, and, from some defects of eye or hand, was unable to train himself to make sketches of those places which interested him; yet,

> 'show me,' he says, 'an old castle or a field of battle, and I was at home at once, filled it with its combatants in their proper costume and overwhelmed my hearers with the enthusiasm of my description.'

He here touches on one of the cardinal idiosyncrasies of his imaginative productions. Their inspiration is derived partly from their scenes, and their fascination is greatly aided by his exceptional mastery of scenic arrangement. While possessing a minute knowledge of the exteriors and interiors of old keeps and castles, of ancient domestic habits and customs, of the modes of ancient combat, of antique military apparel and weapons and of the observances and pageantry of chivalry, he had, also, to obtain a particular setting, a definite environment, for his incidents before his imaginative genius could be adequately kindled; and an outstanding feature of his novels is the elaborate attention bestowed on what may be termed the theatre of his events. If, as he affirms, his sense of the picturesque in scenery was greatly inferior to his sense of the picturesque in action, he was yet, as he states, able, by very careful study and by 'adoption of a sort of technical memory,' regarding the scenes he visited, to utilise their general and leading features with all the effectiveness he desired. But, much more than this may be affirmed. 'Wood, water, wilderness itself,' had, he says, 'an unsurpassable charm' for him; and this charm he completely succeeds in communicating to his readers. His vivid portrayal of the external surroundings immensely enhances the effect of his narrative art; it greatly heightens its interest, and powerfully assists him in conveying a full sense of reality to the incidents he depicts.

As an instance of his employment of a graphically minute description of surroundings to rouse and impress the reader's imagination, reference may be made to the masterly picture of the wildly desolate characteristics of the waste of Cumberland, through which Brown, in *Guy Mannering*, journeyed to find Dandie Dinmont engaged in a life and death struggle with the highway thieves. He also shows a special partiality for night scenes. There is, for example, the Glasgow midnight in *Rob Roy*, the attack on the Tolbooth in *The Heart of Midlothian*, the moonlight night in the beautiful highland valley, where Francis Osbaldistone, journeying to a supper and bed at Aberfoil, is overtaken by two horsemen, one of whom proves to be Diana

Vernon, and, later, is suddenly hailed by a touch on the shoulder from his mysterious friend, the escaped desperado Rob Roy, with the remark 'a braw nicht Maister Osbaldistone, we have met at the mirk hour before now'; the adventure of the Black Knight, who, shortly after twilight in the forest had almost deepened into darkness, chanced on the rude hut of that strange hermit the buxom friar Tuck; and the night of the snowstorm, in which Brown, after leaving the chaise, finds his way through the steep glen to the ruinous hut in which he discovers Meg Merrilies keeping lonely watch over the dying smuggler. But, indeed, generally, an outstanding feature of his romances is the almost magical art with which he conjures up the varied atmosphere and scenery of his events and incidents. Outward nature was the constant companion of his thoughts and feelings; he was familiar with its varied aspects; and, in his references to them in his romances, he shows an unerring instinct for what is appropriate for his purpose.

Again, while employing an immense multiplicity of scenic effects, he is peculiarly lavish in his introduction of personages. His narrative, thus, has an immense sweep and compass. It is not sufficient that his tale should relate the fortunes of hero and heroine. They mainly assist in reviving a particular period of the past, or the chief features of a great historic drama, or the characteristics of certain ecclesiastical or political episodes. The journey, for example, and adventures of Waverley are merely a kind of pretext for a glimpse behind the scenes of the '45; *Guy Mannering* and *Redgauntlet* deal more particularly with the lawless aspects of southern Scotland shortly anterior to Scott's own time, interspersed with amusing pictures of the characteristic features of old legal Edinburgh; *Old Mortality* mirrors the Scotland of the covenanting persecution; and *The Fortunes of Nigel* calls up the eccentric James VI and I, but, more particularly, the seamy side of his court and the ruffianly features of the London of his time. How instructively he contrives to give a national interest to his tale is especially seen in the case of *The Heart of Midlothian*. It is founded on the actual case of a young woman who made a journey to London on her sister's behalf, just as Jeanie Deans did, but, with this, he interweaves the striking story of the Porteous mob and the midnight attack on the Edinburgh Tolbooth, paints vivid pictures of old burgher Edinburgh, of old rustic Scottish life, of the stern Cameronians, of the old-world Scottish laird and his domestic affairs and of various Edinburgh reprobates, sets before us the ancient perils of the Great North road, introduces us to queen Caroline and the great duke of Argyll and his potent representatives, and describes the sovereign sway of the duke's factor, the great Knockdunder, in the west Highlands.

In his creation of personages, Scott displays a fecundity resembling that of nature herself, a fecundity derived from his comprehensive acquaintanceship with all sorts and conditions of men. Like Burns, he at once placed himself on easy terms with everyone he met. His early raids into Liddesdale, for example, gave him a better insight into the characteristics of the border shepherds and farmers than most strangers could obtain, for the simple reason that he at once became intimate with them. The verdict of one of them, at first disposed to stand in awe of the Edinburgh advocate, was, so soon as Scott had spoken to him, 'he's just a chield like ourselves I think'; and this was the impression he produced in whatever circle he moved. He met everyone on terms of their common human nature; he mingled with his workmen without conveying any sense of patronage, he and they were at home with each other. On animals, he seemed to exercise, unconsciously, a mesmeric influence, founded on their instinctive trust in his goodwill; and a similar glamour, derived from his deep geniality, at once secured him the confidence and regard of nearly every person he met.

> 'I believe,' says Lockhart, 'Scott has somewhere expressed in print his satisfaction that, during all the changes of our manners, the ancient freedom of personal intercourse may still be indulged in between a master and an out-of-door's servant, but in truth he kept up the old fashion even with his domestic servants to an extent which I have hardly seen practised by any other gentleman. He conversed with his coachman if he sat by him, as he often did, on the box, with his footman if he happened to be in the rumble.... Any steady servant of a friend of his was soon considered as a sort of friend too, and was sure to have a kind little colloquy to himself at coming and going.'

Referring to the bashful reluctance of Nigel to mix in the conversation of those with whom he was not familiar, Scott remarks :

> It is a fault only to be cured by experience and knowledge of the world which soon teaches every sensible and acute person the important lesson that amusement, and, what is of more consequence, that information and increase of knowledge are to be derived from the conversation of every individual whatsoever with whom he is thrown into a natural train of communication. For ourselves we can assure the reader—and perhaps if we have been able to

afford him amusement it is owing in a great degree to this cause—that we never found ourselves in company with the stupidest of all possible companions in a post-chaise, or with the most arrant cumber-corner that ever occupied a place in the mail-coach, without finding that in the course of our conversation with him we had some idea suggested to us, either grave or gay, or some information communicated in the course of our journey, which we should have regretted not to have learned, and which we should be sorry to have immediately forgotten.'

Scott's curiosity as to idiosyncrasies, though kindly and well bred, was minute and insatiable; and it may further be noted that, for his study of certain types of human nature, he had peculiar opportunities from his post of observation as clerk to the court of session. Moreover, he was happily dowered with the power to combine strenuous literary and other labours with an almost constant round of social distractions. His mental gifts were splendidly reinforced by exceptional physical vigour, and, more particularly, by a nervous system so strongly strung that, for many years, it was not seriously disquieted by incessant studious application combined with an almost constant round of conviviality. To almost the last, it enabled him to perform prodigies of literary labour, even after it had begun to show serious signs of breaking up. Though it must be granted that the infesting of his border home by a constant influx of 'tourists, wonder hunters and all that fatal species,' was, even from monetary considerations—considerations the importance of which were, in the end, to be calamitously revealed—far from an unmixed blessing, it had certain compensations. If he occasionally found it needful—from the behests of literary composition—to escape from it, the social racket, on the whole, gave him more pleasure than boredom. Lockhart describes the society at Abbotsford as 'a brilliant and ever varying' one; and Scott, evidently, enjoyed its diversity; and, while responding to its brilliances, took quiet note of its follies and vanities. Though the 'daily reception of new comers' entailed more or less 'worry and exhaustion of spirit upon all the family,' he was himself, we are told, proof against this. The immense geniality of Scott, which qualified him for so comprehensive an appreciation of human nature, especially manifests itself in his method of representing character. His standpoint is quite the antipodes of that of Swift or Balzac. Mentally and morally, he was thoroughly healthy and happy; there was no taint of morbidity or bitterness in his disposition; and, if aspiring, he was so without any tincture of jealousy or envy. Though possessing potent satiric gifts, he but rarely has recourse to them. Generally his humour is of an exceptionally kindly and sunny character. He hardly ever—and only when, as in the case of the marquis of Argyll, his political prejudices are strongly stirred—manifests an unfairness that verges on spite. If a somewhat superficial, he is not a narrow, moralist. The existence of human frailties does not seriously oppress him; they appeal, many of them, as much to his sense of humour as to his judiciary temper. He shows no trace of the uneasy cynicism which greatly afflicted Thackeray; and, unlike many modern writers, he displays no absorbing anxiety to explore what they deem the depths of human nature and expose its general unsoundness. On the other hand, he is an expert exponent of its eccentricities and its comical qualities; and, if not one of the most profoundly instructive, he is one of the most wholesomely cheerful, of moralists. At the same time, he can admirably depict certain types of vulgarly ambitious scoundrels, such as the attorney Glossin in *Guy Mannering*, and he has a keen eye for a grotesque hypocrite like Thomas Trumbull in *Redgauntlet*. Captain Dirk Hatteraick is, also, a splendid ruffian, although a much less difficult portrait than that of captain Nanty Ewart of 'The Jumping Jenny' and his pathetic struggle between good and evil. On the other hand, his merely villainous creations, whether of the diabolically clever order like Rashleigh, or the somewhat commonplace sort of Lord Dalgarno, or the low and depraved kind of his eminence of Whitefriars—grossly impressive after a fashion though he be—are all a little stagey. In historical characters, his outstanding successes are Louis XI and James VI and I. Here, of course, he had the advantage of having to deal with very marked idiosyncrasies; but this might well have been a snare to an inferior romancer. Scott's portraits of them may be more or less incorrect, but both are very masterly and vivid representations of very definite embodiments of peculiar royal traits. With them, he was much more successful than with Mary queen of Scots, whose stilted heroics do not impress us, and, here, he was handicapped by the conflict between his sympathies and his convictions. His strong cavalier bias, also, on other occasions proved a snare to him. For example, he outrageously exaggerates the sinister qualities of the marquis of Argyll; while his Montrose is a featureless and faultless hero, quite overshadowed in interest by captain Dugald Dalgetty. Claverhouse, again—whom, in *Old Mortality*, he rather infelicitously refers to as 'profound in politics,' and whom, inadvertently, he makes to figure there more as an arrogant coxcomb than as the high-hearted royalist he would wish him to be—is, in *Wandering Willie's Tale*, very impressively revealed to us as he appears in covenanting tradition. On the other hand, the fanaticism of Burley in *Old Mortality* is rather overdrawn: the stern indignation which prompted the murder of archbishop Sharp was not allied to any form of mental disorder. Still, if not historically correct, the picturesque luridness of the fanaticism which is ascribed to him is effectively set forth.

Generally, it may be said that Scott is least successful with his more morally correct and least eccentric personages. He specially fails to interest us in his lovers—perfectly proper but rather buckram young men, with merely average commonplace characteristics. Of Waverley, he himself said:

> The hero is a sneaking piece of imbecility, and if he had married Flora, she would have set him up upon the chimney piece, as Count Borowlaski's wife used to do with him.

As for the heroines, their main fault is their faultlessness; they do and say nothing that provokes criticism; and he is more careful that we should respect and admire than understand them. Catherine Seyton is clever, witty and sprightly. Diana Vernon is rendered interesting by her peculiar surroundings, and, though in a quite ingenuous fashion, verges on unconventionality. Julia Mannering, Lucy Bertram, Flora MacIvor, Edith Bellenden, Miss Wardour are all charming in a slightly different fashion from each other; but little more than the surface of their natures is revealed to us. On account of the peculiar prominence of the love episode in *The Bride of Lammermoor*, and its strong tragic characteristics, some have been inclined to pronounce this novel Scott's masterpiece; but, while the tragic painfulness of portions of the novel is undeniable, and no small art is shown in creating a general atmosphere of tragic gloom and conveying a sense of impending calamity, its tragic greatness is another matter. The chief personalities hardly possess the qualities needful for evoking the highest form of tragic pathos. The almost ludicrous subjection of Sir William to his masterful wife is a serious hindrance to the achievement of the desired effect; while, again, disgust at her besotted prejudice and narrow, stolid pride tends to prevent us from being roused to any other emotion as to its consequences. Then, Lucy Ashton is too weak to win our full sympathy; and her sudden lunacy and mad murderous act shock, rather than impress, us; while, on the other hand, Ravenswood is at once too readily conciliatory and too darkly fierce. And, even if the tragic elements were better compounded than they are, the novel, in other respects, is decidedly inferior to the best of his productions. It has very patent faults—sufficiently accounted for by Scott's condition of almost perpetual torture when he wrote it—and, except in the case of the weird crones, displays less than his usual graphic felicity in the portrayal of Scottish characters, Caleb Balderstone, for example, being a rather wearisome caricature, and the wit expended on his ingenious devices to hide the extreme destitution of his master's larder being of the very cheapest kind.

However admirably he could create a strong and thrilling situation, Scott, in the portrayal of love episodes, fails to interest his readers so much as do many less distinguished novelists. Here, he shows little literary kinship with Shakespeare, with whom he is sometimes compared, with whose influence he was in many respects strongly saturated, from whom he obtained important guidance in regard to artistic methods and whose example is specially apparent in some of his more striking situations. For his almost gingerly method of dealing with love affairs, the exceedingly conventional character of the Edinburgh society in which he moved may, in part, be held responsible. He had an inveterate respect for the stereotyped proprieties. By the time, also, that he began to write his prose romances, love, with him, had mellowed into the tranquil affection of married life. It was mainly in a fatherly kind of way that he interested himself in the amatory interludes of his heroes and heroines, who generally conduct themselves in the same invariably featureless fashion, and do not, as a rule, play a more important part in his narration than that of pawns in a game of chess. With him, romance was not primarily the romance of love, but the general romance of human life, of the world and its activities, and, more especially, of the warring, adventurous and, more or less, strange and curiosity-provoking past. For achieving his best effects, he required a period removed, if even a little less than 'sixty years since,' from his own, a period contrasting more or less strongly, but in, at least, a great variety of ways, with it; and he depended largely on the curiosity latent, if not active, in most persons, about old-time fashions, manners, modes of life, personal characteristics and, more especially, dangers and adventures.

'No fresher paintings of Nature,' says Carlyle, 'can be found than Scott's; hardly anywhere a wider sympathy with man'; but he affirms that, while

> Shakespeare fashions his characters from the heart outwards, your Scott fashions them from the skin inwards, never getting near the heart of them! The one set become living men and women, the other amount to little more than mechanical cases, deceptively painted automatons.

Though a characteristically exaggerated pronouncement, it is undeniable that there is a *soupçon* of truth in it. Scott would have been the last to liken himself to Shakespeare as a delineator of character. He is a little lacking in depth and subtlety; he has an eye mainly for strongly marked characteristics, and certain of his personages are but superficially delineated. He makes no special intellectual or moral demands on us, as does, for example, Meredith or Thackeray; he had little sense of the finer shades, as had Jane Austen; and he cannot quite compare with Carlyle in the portrayal of historic personages. Further, it is a notable circumstance that few or none of his personages develop under his hands; for the most part, they are, throughout the narrative, exhibited with characteristics which are unmodified by time, experience or events. To analyse character was, in fact, as little his aim, as it was to promulgate any special social dogma. As Carlyle laments, he was not 'possessed with an idea'; but, however predominant and effective a part ideas may play in modern drama and fiction, they have their disadvantages; they are apt to prove rather a hindrance than an aid to more than temporary success in the more creative forms of literature. That Scott was not actuated by any more special purpose than that of giving delight to his readers may even be reckoned one of the chief sources of his charm and of the widely beneficent influence he exercises. He attracts us mainly by an exhibition of the multifarious pageantry of life; or, as Carlyle puts it, his was 'a genius *in extenso*, as we may say, not *in intenso*.'

Yet, as a delineator of character, he has his strong points. He had thoroughly studied the lowland Scot. If, not knowing Gaelic, he never properly understood the Highlander, and portrays mainly his superficial peculiarities arising from an imperfect command of lowland Scots and a comparative ignorance of the arts of civilised life—portrays him as the foreigner is usually portrayed in English novels—he knew his lowland Scot as few have ever known him. Here are 'no deceptively painted automatons,' but 'living men and women.' He is more especially successful with the Scot of the humble or burgher class, and with

Scottish eccentrics gentle or simple. Jeanie Deans and her Cameronian father David, the theologically dull but practically wide-awake ploughman Cuddie Headrigg and his fanatic mother the covenanting Mause, Meg Merrilies, even if she be a little stagey, the border farmer, Dandie Dinmont, Dominie Sampson, Ritt Master Dalgetty, Baillie Nicol Jarvie, the bedesman Edie Ochiltree, that pitiable victim of litigation, the irrepressible Peter Peebles, the Antiquary himself—these and such as these are all immortals. His success with such characters was primarily owing to his genial intercourse with all classes and his peculiar sense of humour. In depicting eccentrics or persons with striking idiosyncrasies, or those in the lower ranks of life, he displays at once an amazing fecundity and a well-nigh matchless efficacy. Here, he has a supremacy hardly threatened amongst English writers even by Dickens, for, unlike Dickens, he is never fantastic or extravagant. If not so mirth-provoking as Dickens, he is, in his humourous passages, quite as entertaining, and his eccentrics never, as those of Dickens often do, tax our belief in their possible existence. As a humourist, his one drawback—a drawback which, with many, prevents an adequate appreciation of his merits—is that his most characteristic creations generally express themselves in a dialect the idiomatic niceties of which can be fully appreciated only by Scotsmen, and not now by every one of that nationality.

But the singularity of Scott is the peculiar combination in him of the humourist with the romance writer, of the man of the world with the devoted lover of nature and ardent worshipper of the past. While, with a certain superficiality in the portrayal of particular characters, he, *pace* Carlyle, displays an extraordinary felicity in the portrayal of others, he unites with this peculiar gift an exceptional power of vivifying the past on a very extended scale—the past, at least, as conceived by him. The question has been raised as to the historic value or historic correctness of his presentations. It need hardly be said that he was much more minutely and comprehensively versed in Scottish history and Scottish antiquarianism than in those of other countries, and had a much better understanding of Scottish than of other national characteristics. At the same time, his training as a Scottish novelist was of immense service to him when he found it advisable to seek fresh woods and pastures new. Without his previous Scottish experiences he could, for example, hardly have been so successful as he was in the case either of

Quentin Durward or of *Ivanhoe*, which may be deemed his purely romantic masterpieces. He had no original mastery of the period of Louis XI. He had not even visited the scenes of his story; for these, he relied mainly on certain drawings of landscapes and ancient buildings made by his friend Skene of Rubislaw, who had just returned from a tour in the district. Lockhart, also, observed him 'many times in the Advocates' Library, poring over maps and gazetteers with care and anxiety.' For his historical and biographical inspiration, he was dependent mainly on the *Mémoires* of Philippe de Comines, supplemented by details from the chronicles of the period. We have only to turn to these authorities in order to see with what deftness he created his living world from a few records of the past, and the striking character of his success was attested by the admiring enthusiasm with which the work was received in France.

As regards *Ivanhoe*, it has been shown that he is glaringly at fault in regard to some of the main features of the Norman period, and more particularly as to the relations between Saxons and Normans, on which the main tenor of the narrative depends. Nevertheless, he had so minute a mastery of the manners, customs, cardinal characteristics and circumstances of the chivalric past, and was so profoundly in sympathy with its spirit, that he is able to confer an atmosphere of reality on the period he seeks to illustrate, for which we may look in vain in the records of careful scientific historians.

In the case of the purely Scottish novels, he was more at home and more completely master of his materials; but, for that reason, he was, perhaps, less careful about historic accuracy in details; as he puts it, 'a romancer wants but a hair to make a tether of.' No such persons, for example, as Rashleigh, or Francis Osbaldistone, or Miss Vernon, or her father, were associated in the manner these persons are represented to have been with any Jacobite rising; and, in addition, the whole financial story on which the plot turns is hopelessly muddled. Further, Rob Roy, a historical personage, never played any part in connection with Jacobitism at all similar to that assigned him in the novel. Then, in *Waverley*, the Fergus MacIvor whose ambitions occupy much of our attention is a mere interpolation, and by no means a happy portrait of a Highland chief; and, in *Redgauntlet*, the second appearance of prince Charlie in the north of England is without foundation either in fact or in tradition. Again, in *The Abbot*, historic truth is even more wantonly violated—violated after a fashion that tends to bewilder the reader. While the Setons were very devoted followers of queen Mary, the Henry Seton and Catherine Seton of the novel are merely imaginary creations. Although Mary Seton, one of 'the four Marys,' was sent for by the queen to attend on her in England, and Lord Seton met her shortly after her escape from Lochleven, no lady of the name of Seton was in attendance on her in Lochleven castle. What is worse, the Lady Mary Fleming, whom Scott represents as in attendance on her there is apt to be confounded either with Lady Fleming, who was the queen's governess in France, or with Mary Fleming, one of the four Marys, who, by this time, was the wife of Maitland of Lethington. Further, while Scott may partly be excused for his version of the nature of the pressure on the queen to cause her to demit her crown, he is specially unfortunate in representing Sir Robert Melville as deputed by the council to accompany Lord Lindsay on his mission, though his presence undoubtedly adds to the effectiveness of the scene with the queen. Again, in *Old Mortality*, Scott found it advisable, for artistic purposes, to place Henry Morton in a more immediately dangerous position than could possibly have been his; and, on the other hand, the indulged minister Poundtext, whom he represents as seeking to exercise a moderating influence in the council of the rebels, could not have been there, since none of the indulged ministers took part in the rebellion. Many minor errors of detail in his Scottish novels have also been pointed out by critics; but the important matter is his mastery of the multifarious characteristics of the period with which he deals and his power to bring home to the reader its outstanding peculiarities.

In the non-Scottish novels, and in Scottish novels of earlier periods of history, the spirit of romance is the prevailing element. Here, the portraiture of characters, except in the case of main figures, is generally superficial. Such humorous or eccentric personages as are introduced cannot compare with those who, in the novels of the more modern periods, indulge in the vernacular; they are a kind of hybrid creation, suggested, partly, from the author's own observation and, partly, by books. In the Scottish novels of the more modern periods, while the romance is of a more homely kind, and has, also, for us, lost its freshness in a manner that the earlier or the foreign element has not, there is included, on the other hand, that immortal gallery of Scottish characters to which allusion has already been made, and the creation of which—however highly his purely romantic genius may be estimated—is the most unequivocal testimony to his greatness.

Great as was the actual achievement of Scott, it has reasonably been doubted whether he made the most of his extraordinary endowments. It was hardly contributory to this that, though by no means a poor man, he set himself with desperate eagerness to enrich himself by literature. While he had a deep enthusiasm for the literary vocation; while the hours he spent in writing were mostly hours of keen delight to him and he never apparently deemed it a toil; yet, his social aspirations seem to have been stronger than his literary ambition. As Lockhart states:

> 'His first and last worldly ambition was himself to be the founder of a distinct branch,' of the clan Scott; he 'desired to plant a lasting root, and dreamt not of lasting fame, but of long distant generations rejoicing in the name of "Scott of Abbotsford." By this idea all his reveries, all his aspirations, all his plans and efforts were overshadowed and controlled.'

This ambition was the product of the same romantic sentiment which was the original inspiration of his literary efforts. It was not a mere vulgar striving for opulence and rank; it was associated with peculiar border partialities and enthusiasms; to be other than a border laird and chief and the founder of a new border house had no charms for him. Still, excusable as his ambition may have been, it was to have for him very woeful consequences. Though, without this special incentive, he might not have exerted himself so strenuously in literature as he did, he would have escaped the pecuniary disasters in a herculean effort to remedy which he overtaxed his brain and abruptly shortened his life; and, if the absence of ulterior motives might have lessened his literary production, its fruits might, in quality, have been considerably bettered. True, rapidity of production was one of his special gifts. It was rendered possible by his previous mastery of his materials and the possession of a nervous system which it was almost impossible to tire; and, in his case, the emotional excitement of creation almost demanded celerity of composition; but it was not incumbent on him to omit careful revision of his first drafts. Had he not disdained this, many somewhat wearisome passages might have been condensed, various errors or defects of style might have been corrected, redundances might have been removed, inconsistencies weeded out and the plots more effectively adjusted. How immensely he might have bettered the literary quality of his novels by careful revision there is sufficient proof in that splendid masterpiece *Wandering Willie's Tale*, the manuscript of which shows many important amendments.

While the carelessness of Scott is manifest in defects of construction and in curious contradictions in small details, it is more particularly apparent in the style of portions of merely narrative or descriptive passages. Yet, with all its frequent clumsiness, its occasional lapses into mere rodomontade, its often loosely interwoven paragraphs, and its occasionally halting grammar, his style is that of a great writer. Except when he overburdens it with lore, legal or antiquarian, it sparkles with interest, its phrases and epithets are often exceptionally happy, and, in his more emotional or more strikingly imaginative passages, he attains to an exceptional felicity of diction. This is the case throughout *Wandering Willie's Tale*; and the description of the ghastly revellers in Redgauntlet castle beginning: 'There was the fierce Middleton,' is unsurpassable in apt and graphic phraseology. The farewell of Meg Merrilies to Ellangowan has, also, been singled out by critics for special praise; but many of his purely descriptive passages are, likewise, wholly admirable. Take, for example, the account of the gathering storm in *The Antiquary*:

> The disk of the sun became almost totally obscured ere he had altogether sunk below the horizon, and an early and lurid shade of darkness blotted the serene twilight of a summer evening, etc.

or the picture in *The Abbot* of the various personages and groups that traversed the vestibule of Holyrood palace: 'Here the hoary statesman,' etc.; or the description of the Glasgow midnight in *Rob Roy*:

> Evening had now closed and the growing darkness gave to the broad, still and deep expanse of the brimful river, first a hue sombre and uniform—then a dismal and turbid appearance, partially lighted by a waning and pallid moon, etc.

or the woodland scene in *The Legend of Montrose*, where Dalgetty is pursued by the bloodhounds of the marquis of Argyll:

> The moon gleamed on the broken pathway and on the projecting cliffs of rock round which it winded, its light intercepted here and there by the branches of bushes and dwarf trees, which finding nourishment in the crevices of the rocks, in places overshadowed the brow and ledge of the precipice. Below a thick copsewood lay in deep and dark shadow, etc.

Passages such as these are common with Scott; and, as for his dialogues, though, in the English, he occasionally lapses into curious stiltednesses, the Scottish or semi-Scottish are invariably beyond praise, both for their apt expressiveness, and their revelation of character.

Necessarily, Scott's influence was felt more drastically in Scotland than elsewhere. The enormous interest aroused there by the publication of his poetic romances and then of his novels we can now hardly realise. It quite outvied that immediately caused by the poetry of Burns, who, to use Burns's own expression, was less 'respected' during his life than he gradually came to be after his death. While some aspects of Scott's presentations of the past called forth, at first, some protests from the stricter sectarians, the general attitude towards them was that of enthusiastic appreciation; and it is hardly possible to exaggerate their effect in liberating Scotland from the trammels of social and religious tradition. He did not, however, found a poetic school in Scotland. In England, he had various poetic imitators that are now forgotten; and he had, further, a good deal to do with the predominance of narrative in subsequent English verse. Byron, also, was directly indebted to him in the case of his narrative verse, and echoes of his method and manner are even to be found in Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome.* In fiction, he may almost be reckoned the founder of the historical romance, in which he has had many successors, both in this country and abroad; and, if Smollett was his predecessor in the Scottish novel, and is more responsible than he for the earlier novels of Galt, Scott may be deemed the originator of a pretty voluminous Scottish romantic school, of which the most distinguished representative is R. L. Stevenson; while, with Smollett and Galt, he has been the forerunner of a vernacular school of fiction which, within late years, developed into a variety to which the term 'kailyard' has, with more or less appositeness, been applied. On the continent, Scott shared with Byron a vogue denied to all other English writers except Shakespeare, and his influence was closely interwoven with the romantic movement there, and, more especially, with its progress in France.

CHAPTER II

BYRON

George Gordon, sixth Lord Byron, and descendant of an ancient Norman family that accompanied William the Conqueror to England, was the only son of 'Mad Jack' Byron by his second marriage with the Scottish heiress, Catherine Gordon of Gight. He was born in London, on 22 January 1788; but, shortly after his birth, owing to his father's withdrawal to France in order to escape from his creditors, the future poet was brought by his mother to Aberdeen. Here, his first boyhood was spent, and the impressions which he received of Deeside, Lochnagar and the Grampians remained with him throughout his life and have left their mark upon his poetry. By the death of his great-uncle, William, fifth Lord Byron, in 1798, the boy succeeded to the title and to the Byron estates of Newstead priory and Rochdale; in the year 1801, he entered Harrow school. Up to this time, his life had been that of 'a wild mountain colt'; his education, both intellectual and moral, had been neglected, and his mother petted and abused him in turn; his father had died when he was a child of three. Sensitive and proud by nature, his sensitiveness was aggravated by his lameness and his poverty, while his pride was nurtured by his succession, at the age of ten, to a peerage. At Harrow, he made many friends, read widely and promiscuously in history and biography, but never became an exact scholar. To these schoolboy years also belongs the story of his romantic, unrequited love for Mary Ann Chaworth. From Harrow, Byron proceeded, in October 1805, to Trinity college, Cambridge; but the university, though it widened his circle of friends, never won his affections in the way that Harrow had. While at Harrow, he had written a number of short poems, and, in January 1807, he printed for private circulation a slender volume of verse, *Fugitive Pieces*, the favourable reception of which led to the publication, in the following March, of *Hours of Idleness*. The contemptuous, but not wholly unjust, criticism of this volume in *The Edinburgh Review*, which is generally supposed to have been the work of Lord Brougham, while it stung the sensitive poet to the quick, also spurred him to retaliation, and, early in 1809, appeared the famous satire, *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, which swiftly ran through several editions and made its author famous. Shortly before it appeared, Byron came of age and took his seat in the House of Lords.

In the following June, accompanied by his friend, John Cam Hobhouse, Byron left England for a tour in the Mediterranean and the east. He was away for little more than a year; but the impressions which he received of the life and scenery of Spain, Portugal and the Balkan peninsula profoundly affected his mind and left an indelible imprint upon his subsequent work as a poet. The letters which he wrote at this time furnish a singularly vivid record of the gay life of Spanish cities, the oriental feudalism of Ali pasha's Albanian court, and of the memories of, and aspirations for, political freedom which were quickened within him during his sojourn at Athens. The first two books of *Childe Harold* and the oriental tales—*The Giaour, The Bride of Abydos, The Corsair* and *The Siege of Corinth*—were the immediate outcome of this year of travel, but the memory of the scenes which he had witnessed remained freshly in his mind when, years afterwards, he composed *Don Juan*, and, at the close of his life, played his heroic part in the liberation of Greece.

The publication of the first two cantos of *Childe Harold* in 1812, shortly after his return to England, placed Byron on the summit of the pinnacle of fame, and, from this time onwards to his death, he remained, through good report and evil report, the poet most prominently before the minds of Englishmen. The story of the three years which he spent as the lion of London society under the regency, and of his marriage with Miss Milbanke in 1815, is too familiar to need detailed record here; nor is this the place to dwell upon the causes which led to the separation of husband and wife shortly after the birth of their only child, Ada, in 1816. Rightly or wrongly, the sympathies of English society at this crisis in Byron's life were overwhelmingly on the side of Lady Byron, and the poet was subjected to the grossest insults. At first bewildered, and then lacerated in his deepest feelings, by the hue and cry against him, he perceived that 'if what was whispered and muttered and murmured was true, I was unfit for England; if false, England was unfit for me.' He accordingly left England upon him was ennobling. She lifted him out of the mire of Venetian libertinism and aroused his interest in the cause of Italian freedom; she inspired one of his sublimest poems, *The Prophecy of Dante*, while such was her power over him that, for her sake, he desisted, for a time, from the continuation of *Don Juan* after the completion of the fifth canto. In December 1819, Byron broke up his home at Venice and moved to Ravenna, in order to be nearer to the countess. Here, he was visited by Shelley, who, in a letter to Mrs Shelley, dated 8 August 1821, speaks as follows of the change which had come over his friend:

> Lord Byron is greatly improved in every respect. In genius, in temper, in moral views, in health, in happiness. The connection with La Guiccioli has been an inestimable benefit to him.... He has had mischievous passions, but these he seems to have subdued, and he is becoming, what he should be, a virtuous man. The interest which he took in the politics of Italy, and the actions he performed in consequence of it, are subjects not fit to be *written*, but are such as will delight and surprise you[1].

In the preceding year, the countess had obtained a papal decree of separation from her husband, and was now living in a villa belonging to her brother, count Gamba, about fifteen miles from Ravenna.

Byron's literary activity remained unabated in his new home. To the Ravenna period belong, in addition to his *Prophecy of Dante*, *Francesca of Rimini* and his translation of the first canto of Pulci's *Morgante Maggiore*, most of his dramatic writings. Drama had always interested him keenly, and, while living in London, after his return from the east, he had been elected a member of the Drury lane theatre committee, and had thus gained some firsthand knowledge of the stage. His earliest play, *Manfred*, had been begun in Switzerland and completed at Venice in the spring of 1817; after his removal to Ravenna, he turned his attention to historical tragedy, and, in little more than a year, produced his two tragedies of Venetian history, *Marino Faliero* and *The Two Foscari*, together with his oriental *Sardanapalus*. Following upon these came the two 'mysteries,' *Cain* and *Heaven and Earth*, both written *currente calamo* between the July and October of 1821. These plays were not intended for the stage, and the only one acted during the author's lifetime was *Marino Faliero*, which was performed at Drury lane, against Byron's express wish, in April 1821. To the Ravenna period also belongs Byron's *Letter to John Murray, Esq. on the Rev. W. L. Bowles's Strictures on the Life and Writings of Pope*, in which the poet came forward as the champion of Pope and the Augustan school of poetry against the attacks directed upon them by the romanticists. The controversy is chiefly interesting as an indication of Byron's regard for the classical principles of literary taste and, arising out of this, his uncritical exaltation of the poetry of Crabbe and Rogers over the great romantic poets of his own day. Of far greater consequence was his attack upon Southey, which followed a little later. The feud between the two poets was an old one: Southey had attacked Byron in an article contributed to *Blackwood's Magazine* (August 1819) and the younger poet had replied with *Some Observations* on the attack, in which he brought a charge of apostasy and slander against the poet laureate. In 1821 appeared Southey's fatuous *A Vision of Judgment*, prefixed to which was a gross onslaught upon *Don Juan* as 'a monstrous combination of horror and mockery, lewdness and impiety,' and a reference to its author as the founder of 'the Satanic school' inspired by

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[1] Shelley's *Prose Works*, ed. Shepherd, R. H., vol. II, p. 337.

> the spirit of Belial in their lascivious parts, and the spirit of Moloch in those loathsome images of atrocities and horrors which they delight to represent.

To all this, Byron's effective rejoinder was his own *The Vision of Judgment*, published in Leigh Hunt's magazine, *The Liberal*, in 1822. Byron's victory was complete and uncontestable, though the British government brought against the publisher a charge of 'calumniating the late King and wounding the feelings of his present Majesty,' and won their suit.

Byron's connection with countess Guiccioli brought him, as already stated, into direct relationship with the Carboneria, one of the many secret societies of the time in Italy, which had its head-quarters in Naples, and of which count Pietro Gamba was an enthusiastic leader. Its ultimate aim was the liberation of Italy from foreign domination and the establishment of constitutional government. To Byron, this was 'a grand object—the very poetry of politics,' and to it he devoted, at this time, both his wealth and his influence. But the movement, owing to lack of discipline and resolution on the part of its adherents, proved abortive, and the Papal States confiscated the property of the Gambas and exiled them from the Romagna. They fled to Pisa in the autumn of 1821, where Byron soon joined them, and shared with them the palazzo Lanfranchi. The change of residence brought Byron into closer contact with Shelley, whose home, at this time, was in Pisa, and, through Shelley, he made the acquaintance of captain Medwin, the author of the *Journal of the*

Conversations of Lord Byron (1824). Here, too, he first met captain Trelawny, who subsequently accompanied the poet to Greece and, many years after Byron's death, published his *Recollections of the last days of Shelley and Byron* (1858). In April 1822, a heavy blow fell upon the poet through the death of his natural daughter Allegra, whose mother was Jane Clairmont, a half-sister of Mary Shelley; and, in the following month, in consequence of a street-brawl with an Italian dragoon who had knocked Shelley from his horse, the little circle of friends at Pisa was broken up. Byron and the Gambas retired to a villa near Leghorn, while the Shelleys, with Trelawny, left for Lerici. The tragic death of Shelley in the gulf of Spezia took place two months later.

Shortly before Shelley's death, he and Byron had prevailed upon Leigh Hunt to leave England and come out with his family to Italy, in order to take part with the two poets in the foundation of a magazine, *The Liberal.* The death of Shelley was a severe blow to this undertaking; but the first number, containing Byron's *The Vision of Judgment,* appeared in September 1822; the second number included among its pages the mystery-play, *Heaven and Earth,* while in the third number appeared, as an anonymous work, the literary eclogue entitled *The Blues,* which directed a somewhat ineffective satire upon the literary coteries of London society. After the appearance of the fourth number, containing Byron's translation of *Morgante Maggiore,* in July 1823, *The Liberal* came to an untimely end, and the relations between Byron and Leigh Hunt, which had from the first been strained, ended in complete rupture.

In the meantime, Byron had once more changed his place of abode, and was now residing in the villa Saluzzo, Genoa. It was here that he made the acquaintance of the earl and countess of Blessington, and to the countess's vivacious, if untrustworthy, *Conversations,* we owe much of our knowledge of the poet's manner of life at this time. During these last years in Italy, his poetic composition had proceeded apace. *Don Juan,* after being laid aside for some time, was now, with the full consent of countess Guiccioli, continued. The sixth canto was begun in June 1822, and this, with the next two cantos, was published in the following month; by the end of March 1823, the sixteenth canto was finished. To the Pisa-Genoa period, also, belong his domestic tragedy, *Werner,* founded upon *The German's Tale,* included in Sophia and Harriet Lee's *Canterbury Tales,* his unfinished drama, *The Deformed Transformed,* the satiric poem, *The Age of Bronze,* dealing with the last phase in Napoleon's career and the congress of Verona, and, finally, his romantic verse-tale, *The Island.*

The failure of the Carbonari movement, in 1821, put an end, for the time being, to Byron's active cooperation in the cause of national freedom. But, even before the final defeat of the Carboneria, a new liberation movement in a new field had begun, on behalf of which Byron was destined to lay down his life. The Greek war of liberation from the thraldom of the Turk was set on foot in the spring of 1821, and soon won the support of enthusiasts in England, who formed a committee to help forward the movement and supply the Greeks with the necessary funds. Byron's sympathy with the cause of Greek freedom dates from his sojourn in Greece in the years 1810—11, and finds eloquent expression in the second canto of *Childe Harold.* In the spring of 1823, his active support in the Greek cause was solicited by the London committee, acting through captain Blaquiere and John Bowring, and, after a little hesitation, Byron decided to devote himself whole-heartedly to the movement; with that end in view, he prepared to man an armed brig and set sail for Greece. At the moment of departure, he received a highly courteous greeting in verse from Goethe, and, in acknowledging it, declared his intention of paying a visit to Weimar, should he return in safety from Greece. On 24 July, accompanied by count Pietro Gamba and captain Trelawny, he started from Leghorn in the brig 'Hercules,' and, ten days later, reached the island of Cephalonia in the Ionian sea. Here, he remained until the close of the year, anxiously watching developments and endeavouring, with great tact and patience, to put an end to Greek factions. His presence in Greek waters inspired enthusiasm among the people struggling for freedom; they looked to him as their leader, and some even hinted that, if success should attend their arms, he might become the king of an emancipated Greece. Correspondence took place between Byron and prince Alexander Mavrocordatos, one of the chief leaders in the war of liberation; and, on the arrival of the prince at Mesolonghi, with a fleet of ships, Byron joined him there, after an adventurous voyage, in January 1824. In the conduct of affairs at this time, Byron showed himself to be a great statesman and a born leader of men. The work of advocating unity among the various Greek tribes was no easy task for him, and he laboured tirelessly in the malarial climate of the gulf of Patras in the furtherance of this aim. His military project was to lead an expedition against the Turkish stronghold Lepanto, and, with this in view, he enlisted the services of five hundred Suliotes. But mutiny broke out among the soldiers, and, at a critical moment, an epileptic fit threatened Byron's life. For a time, he recovered; but, early in April, he caught a severe chill when sailing, wet to the skin, in an open boat; rheumatic fever set in, and, on the nineteenth day of the month, he died. His death was a severe blow to Greece, and plunged the nation into profound grief; when the news reached England, Tennyson, then a boy of fourteen, carved the words 'Byron is dead' upon a rock at Somersby, and felt that 'the whole world seemed darkened to me.' But the impartial verdict of posterity, looking back upon his career and endeavouring to see it in its true perspective, has been that nothing in his life became him like the leaving of it. The ardent wish of Greece was that his body should be buried in the temple of Theseus at Athens, and thus remain in the land for which he had laid down his life; but other counsels prevailed, and Byron found his last resting place in the village church of Hucknall Torkard, outside the gates of Newstead priory.

In passing from the generation of Wordsworth and Coleridge to that of Byron and Shelley, we recognise that a certain change had come over the spirit of English poetry, and that this change, in no small measure, was determined by the change which had come over the mind of England and of Europe. Wordsworth and Coleridge had found inspiration in the large faiths and regenerating principles which called into being the French revolution; Byron and Shelley, on the other hand, produced their most characteristic works in the days of the reactionary Holy Alliance. And in the space between the era of faith and the era of reaction loomed the colossal form of Napoleon astride a blood-stained Europe. Shelley, though he underwent times of deep depression and suffered much at the hands of a hostile government, was of too ethereal a temper to be cowed by the spirit of the time, or to abandon his faith in man's perfectibility imparted to him by Godwin; but, Byron, with his feet of clay, and with a mind which, for good and evil, was profoundly responsive to the prevailing currents of contemporary thought, remained, from first to last. the child of his age. And that age was one of profound disillusionment. The implicit trust in the watchwords of the revolution had long faded from men's minds, while the principles by which men hoped to consecrate the settlement of the congress of Vienna were proving still more illusory. The Holy Alliance was to bring back the golden age, and the emperor of Russia had proudly declared that, henceforth, princes were to regard each other as brothers, and their peoples as their children, and that all their acts were to be founded upon the gospel of Christ. Yet, within a very few years, the Holy Alliance had become a byword among men, standing as it did for all that was tyrannical and reactionary; the attitude of the progressive party in England towards the principles which really actuated it is clearly indicated by Moore's *Fables for the Holy Alliance*, Shelley's *Lines written during the Castlereagh Administration* and many a scathing passage of *Don Juan*.

The younger generation of poets, romantics though they were, also differed from their elders in some of the main principles of literary criticism. The early masters of the romantic school, in their war against the neo-classic canons of the Augustan, confounded classicism with the Greek and Roman classics; and, in their joyous discovery of medieval romance and ballad, paid no regard to the poetry and mythology of Greece. Reaction inevitably followed, and to the younger generation of poets fell the duty of touching with the magic wand of romance the time-honoured myths and fables of early Greece. Thus, from out of the cold ashes of classicism there arose the Hellenism of the early nineteenth century, with Shelley and Keats as its inspired prophets. To Byron, the political movements of modern Greece were of more account than its ancient poetry and mythology, yet, in him too, there is a strong reaction against the romanticism of the preface to *Lyrical Ballads*. When the romantic principles of the new school seemed everywhere triumphant, he came forward as the dauntless champion of Pope, and, when he essayed drama, he turned his back upon Shakespeare and sat at the feet of Alfieri. Byron was ever of the opposition, and, to many, his championship of classicism has seemed little better than the pose of perversity; but a close study of his works serves to show that, while much of his poetry is essentially romantic in spirit, and even enlarges the horizon of romanticism, he never wholly broke away from the Augustan poetic diction.

The union of classicism and romanticism is everywhere apparent in *Hours of Idleness*. The romantic note is clearly sounded in such verses as *I would I were a careless child*, *When I roved a young Highlander* and the justly famous *Lachin y Gair*; the influence of Macpherson's *Ossian* is very strong in *The Death of Calmar and Orla*, and blends with that of the ballad-poets in *Oscar of Alva*. No less apparent is the influence of Moore: one may trace it in the elegiac strain of the love-lyrics and in the rhetorical trick of repetition at the close of the stanza; it is obvious, too, that Byron has successfully imitated the anapaestic lilt of *Irish Melodies* in many of his lyric and elegiac poems. At the same time, he shows no desire to break away from the eighteenth century traditions. *Childish Recollections* is conceived and executed in the manner of Pope. The personification of abstractions, the conventional poetic diction and the fingering of the heroic couplet, alike recall the Augustan traditions, which are no less apparent in such poems as *Epitaph on a Friend* and *To the Duke of Dorset.* In the *Elegy on Newstead Abbey,* thought, sentiment and verse recall the famous *Elegy* of Gray, while, in the lines *To Romance,* he professes to turn away with disgust from the motley court of romance where Affectation and 'sickly Sensibility' sit enthroned, and to seek refuge in the realms of Truth. Thus already in this early volume of poems we meet with that spirit of disillusionment which informs much of Byron's later work, while, in the closing stanza of *I would I were a careless child,* we have a foretaste of the Byron of *Manfred,* eager to shun mankind and to take refuge in the gloom of the mountain glens. At the same time, this early volume bears witness to that which his letters abundantly show—Byron's great capacity for friendship. In spite of all his misanthropy, no poet has esteemed more highly than Byron the worth of friendship, or cherished a deeper affection for scenes around which tender associations had grown up; and, in this first volume of verses, the generous tributes to old school-friends, and the outpouring of his heart in loyal affection for Harrow, occupy no small space.

In *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers,* we witness the full triumph of Byronic classicism. Inspired by Pope, and by Gifford's *Maeviad* and *Baviad,* this high-spirited satire is, indeed, the *Dunciad* of romanticism. Its undiscriminating attack upon almost every member of the romantic school is accompanied by an equally undiscriminating laudation of Dryden and Pope, together with those poets of Byron's own generation, Rogers and Campbell, whose *Pleasures of Memory* and *Pleasures of Hope* remained faithful, in an age of faithlessness, to the classical tradition. Byron is himself the severest critic of his own satire, and, in a letter written from Switzerland in July 1816, he censures its tone and temper, and acknowledges 'the injustice of much of the critical and some of the personal part of it.' In concision and finish of style, Byron falls far below the level of consummate mastery of satiric portraiture reached by Pope in the *Epistles to Arbuthnot* and *To Augustus,* while he makes no attempt to imitate the brilliant mock-heroic framework of the *Dunciad*: but the disciple has caught much of his master's art of directing the shafts of his raillery against the vulnerable places in his adversaries' armour, and even the most enthusiastic admirer of Scott, Coleridge or Wordsworth can afford to laugh at the travesty of *Marmion* and *Lyrical Ballads.* In spite of occasional telling phrases, like that in which he characterises Crabbe as 'nature's sternest painter yet the best,' the satire is of little value as literary criticism; while the fact that he directs his attack upon the romantic poets and, at the same time, upon their arch-adversary, Jeffrey, is sufficient indication that it was individual prejudice rather than any fixed conviction which inspired the poem.

It is difficult to overestimate the influence upon Byron's poetic career of his travels through southern Europe in the years 1809—10; though different in character, it was as far-reaching as that experienced by Goethe during his tour in Italy twenty-three years before. For the time being, his sojourn in the Spanish and Balkan peninsulas put an end to his classical sympathies and made him a votary of romance. His pictures of Spain, it is true, are mainly those of a realist and a rhetorician, but, when he has once set foot upon Turkish soil, a change appears; here, his life was, in itself, a romantic adventure, and, among the Albanian fastnesses, he was brought face to face with a world which was at once oriental in its colouring, and medieval in its feudalism. The raw material of romance which Scott, in the shaping of his verse-tales, had had to gather laboriously from the pages of medieval chroniclers, was here deployed before Byron's very eyes, and the lightning speed with which he wrote his oriental tales on his return to England was due to the fact that he had only to recall the memories of what he had himself seen while a sojourner in the empire of the Turk. Hence, too, the superiority of Byron's eastern pictures to those of Southey and Moore: while they had been content to draw upon the record of books, he painted from life.

The surprising success of the first two cantos of *Childe Harold* on their first appearance in 1812 was in no small measure due to the originality of the design, and to Byron's extension of the horizon of romance. Before this time, poets had made certain attempts to set forth in verse the experiences of their foreign travels. Thus, Goldsmith's *Traveller* is the firstfruits of the tour drama, the principles of classicism are in force. Byron's reverence for the classic mould finds expression already in his *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers,* in which he makes the following appeal to Sheridan:

> Give, as thy last memorial to the age,
> One classic drama, and reform the stage.

The acquaintance which he gained, during his residence in Italy, with the classical tragedies of Alfieri deepened the convictions of his youth, and the influence of the Italian tragedian can be traced in all Byron's historical dramas. This influence is, perhaps, strongest in *Marino Faliero,* and is all the more remarkable in that Byron is following in the path marked out by the romantic masters, Shakespeare and Otway, in his portrayal of Venetian life under its doges. But, here, as in *The Two Foscari,* the dramatic workmanship, though faithful to that regularity and precision of outline enjoined by classic tradition, suffers much from the recalcitrant nature of the material dramatised. The conduct of Marino Faliero, like that of the younger Foscari, though more or less true to history, is felt to be dramatically improbable; the motives which inspire the courses of action are inadequate, and indulgence in rhetorical declamation—the besetting sin of classical tragedy from Seneca onwards—adds still further to the sense of unreality in these plays.

Sardanapalus is, from every point of view, a greater success than either of the Venetian tragedies. Though the plot is drawn from historical records—the *Bibliothecae Historicae* of Diodorus Siculus—Byron allows himself a free hand in shaping his materials, and the love-story, with all that concerns the heroine, Myrrha, is pure invention. The play was written at Ravenna in 1821 and owes much to the poet's daily intercourse with Theresa Guiccioli. Indeed, much might be said in favour of the view that the countess is herself portrayed in the person of Myrrha, who is painted with far greater sympathy and truth to life than any of the heroines of the verse-tales, while self-portraiture is seen in every line of the hero, Sardanapalus. The Assyrian king has far more of Byron in him than any of the so-called Byronic heroes; for, while they are but shadowy representations of a certain temper of mind, Sardanapalus is a creature of flesh and blood. Nor is the dramatic interest summed up in a single character: Myrrha, the Greek slave, Zarina, the wronged queen, and her brother, Salamenes, are all living characters, lacking, it may be, the subtle complexity of Shakespeare's *dramatis personae,* but boldly and firmly outlined in the manner of classic tragedy, to which this play conforms more closely than any other of Byron's works.

In *Werner* and *The Deformed Transformed*, there is a return to the romantic pattern of dramatic workmanship. The former is an unconvincing attempt to dramatise one of the *Canterbury Tales* of Sophia and Harriet Lee, and is deficient both in poetry and dramatic power: the latter, also based, to a certain extent, on a contemporary novel—Joshua Pickersgill's *The Three Brothers* (1803)—is an excursion into the realms of necromancy, and daringly presents the figure of a hunchback Julius Caesar engaging in the siege of Rome in 1527, and assuming the *rôle* of a Mephistopheles.

It is an easy transition from Byron's historical dramas to such poems as *The Lament of Tasso* and *The Prophecy of Dante*, which take the form of dramatic soliloquies and may be looked upon as the creations of the historic imagination. The former was written in 1817, after a visit to the scenes of Tasso's life at Ferrara, while the latter belongs to the year 1819, which the poet spent in the city of Ravenna, where Dante lies buried. It is dedicated to countess Guiccioli, who suggested the theme. The mood of *The Lament* is one of unavailing sadness, ennobled by pride and transfigured by the Italian poet's love for Leonora d' Este; and the expression of this love and grief is marred by no rhetorical artifice on Byron's part, whose sympathy with Tasso renders him for once forgetful of self and capable of giving voice to a passion that was not his own but another's. *The Prophecy* is cast in a more ambitious mould, and is charged with intense personal emotion. The Dante who speaks is the apostle of that political liberty which had grown dear to Byron at a time when he was living in a country that lay under the Austrian yoke. Though written in English, it was, as Medwin tells us, intended for the Italians, to whom it was to be a glorious vision, revealed to them by their great national poet, of the *risorgimento* of Ital in their own day. Byron has, perhaps, failed to reproduce the noble clarity of Dante's mind, but he has caught the patriotic pride and *saeva indignatio* of the great Florentine, and, in making him the foreteller of an age when

> The Genius of my Country shall arise,
> A Cedar towering o'er the Wilderness,
> Lovely in all its branches to all eyes,
> Fragrant as fair, and recognised afar,
> Wafting its native incense through the skies—[1]

[1] Canto iv, 74—78.

he has magnificently associated the aspirations of Dante with those of himself in the days of the Carboneria. Byron's *terza rima* does not lack power or sonority but it is not the *terza rima* of the *Commedia*; for, whereas Dante almost invariably makes a distinct pause at the close of the stanza, Byron frequently runs on the sense from one tercet to another and, thereby, goes far to destroy the metrical effect produced upon the ear by Dante.

In no province of poetry is Byron's command of success so uncertain as in that of the lyric. He has left us a few songs which rank high even in an age which was transcendently great in lyric power and melody. But, only too often, the beauty with which one of his lyrics opens is not sustained, the passion grows turbid and the thought passes from pure vision to turgid commonplace. Among the most impassioned of his love-lyrics is that entitled *When we two parted*; it was written in 1808 and may have been inspired by the poet's hopeless passion for Mary Chaworth. To the same tragic episode in his career, though written later than the song, we owe *The Dream* (1816), in which passion and imagination combine to produce one of the most moving poems that Byron ever wrote. Intensely lyrical in spirit, the poem is, nevertheless, written in blank verse, which Byron here manipulates with a dexterity that he seems to have utterly lost in the loosely knit structure of his dramatic blank verse. The same volume which contained *The Dream* contained, also, another visionary poem in blank verse, *Darkness.* To those who assert that Byron, in his serious poetry, is little more than a *poseur* and a rhetorician, this poem should be a sufficient answer. It is the work of an unbridled imagination, a day-dream of clinging horrors; but, amid all its tumultuous visions of a world in which cosmos is reduced to chaos, we are made to feel the naked sincerity of the poet's soul.

The most important group of Byron's poems, those in which his genius and personality find their fullest expression, still remains for consideration. His discovery of the Italian medley-poem, written in the *ottava rima*, was, for him, the discovery of a new world; and, just as Scott found free play for the riches of his mind only when he exchanged the verse-romance for the novel, so, also, Byron attained the full emancipation of his genius only when he turned from drama and romance to realistic and satiric narrative poetry and took as his models the works of the Italian burlesque poets from Pulci to Casti. This discovery also served to put an end to the conflict which had gone on in Byron's mind between the classic and romantic principles of art. What we see is the triumph of yet a third combatant, namely realism, which, entering late into the fray, carries all before it. His latest dramas, and his verse-tale, *The Island*, not to mention certain romantic episodes which find a place in *Don Juan*, show that Byron never wholly abandoned romance, but, from the time when he wrote *Beppo* (1818), realism was the master-bias of his mind, while the break with classicism was complete. With this triumph of realism, satire once more comes into full play: it is no longer the formal satire of the Augustan school, such as he had essayed in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, but burlesque satire, unconstrained and whimsical, and delighting in the sudden anticlimaxes and grotesque incongruities which find a spacious hiding-place in the *ottava rima*. Byron's study of Italian literature had begun long before he set foot on Italian soil, and it is curious that, first of all, he should have employed the octave stanza in his *Epistle to Augusta* (1816), in a mood of entire seriousness, apparently without suspecting its capacity for burlesque. It was Frere's *The Monks, and the Giants* (1817) which first disclosed to him, as he gratefully acknowledges[1], its fitness for effects of this sort. But his true masters are the Italians themselves—Pulci in the fifteenth century, Berni in the sixteenth and Casti in the eighteenth. Except in his account of the court of Catherine II in *Don Juan*, Byron rarely had recourse to the Italian medley-poets for incidents of narrative; it was manner and not matter which they furnished. The temper of his mind was similar to theirs, and the mobility of his genius enabled him to reproduce with consummate ease their note of light-hearted, cynical banter, their swift transitions from grave to gay, their humourous digressions and their love of grotesque images and still more grotesque rimes.

It is, moreover, questionable whether Byron would ever have written his great comic masterpieces if he had continued to live under the grey skies of England and amid the restraining conventions of English society. *Beppo*, from beginning to end, is steeped in the atmosphere of Italy; its mood is that of the Venetian carnival; in tone and temper it is the most alien poem in our literature. And, without *Beppo*, there might never have been a *Don Juan*. In that case, the student of Byron would have been compelled to turn to his letters for the full disclosure of his genius and personality, and for a complete understanding of the fact that

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[1] "I have since written a poem (of 84 octave stanzas), humorous, in or after the excellent manner of Mr Whistlecraft (whom I take to be Frere) on a Venetian anecdote which amused me." (Letter to John Murray, 12 October 1817.)

Byron was infinitely greater and more versatile than the Byronic hero of the verse-tales and the plays. Those letters rank with the best in a literature singularly rich in epistolography, and, in them, we see, in boon profusion, the racy wit, the persiflage and the rare colloquial ease which reappear with dazzling effect in his later poetry.

In its tolerant, almost genial, portrayal of the social licence of Italian burgess life, *Beppo* is the direct descendant of the Italian *novella* of the early renascence, while, in its truth to reality and inimitable gaiety, it rivals the *Decameron.* To the unwary reader, the return of Beppo, disguised as a Turkish merchant, may seem the occasion for a clash of rapiers, but nothing was farther from Byron's mind, and nothing would have destroyed more effectually that atmosphere of amused tolerance and polished irony which hangs over the poem, and keeps heroics at arm's length. The poem also shows that its author, at one step, had gained full mastery of those subtle effects of style and rime which are the peculiar light of *ottava rima.*

In *The Vision of Judgment,* the verse is the same, but the mood is different. In *Beppo,* the satire is diffused in playful irony; here, it is direct and personal. *The Vision* is, indeed, matter for mirth, but Byron never conceals the spirit of bitter indignation in which the travesty was conceived. Southey's fulsome adulation of the dead monarch roused him to anger, and the anger is that of the impassioned lover of liberty who saw, in George III, the incarnation of the power of tyranny:

> He ever warr'd with freedom and the free:
>   Nations as men, home subjects, foreign foes,
> So that they uttered the word 'Liberty!'
>   Found George the Third their first opponent. (st. XLV.)

It cannot be denied that Southey's poem readily lent itself to travesty, but this fact does not in the least diminish the perfection of Byron's constructive art or his mastery of satiric portraiture. The colloquial ease of *Beppo* is maintained, but there are fewer digressions; while, in the description of Lucifer's approach to the gates of heaven and of his reception there by Michael, Byron momentarily rises to the dignity of the epic. One of Southey's reviewers accused him of profaneness in his attempt to 'convert the awful tribunal of Heaven into a drawing-room levee[1]' in which he himself plays the part of a lord-in-waiting, and it was upon this scene in Southey's *Vision* that Byron swooped, with an unerring eye for burlesque effect. Of Southey's cloud of witnesses only two—Wilkes and Junius—are summoned to the judgment-seat by Byron, but the part which they play in the action is magnificently conceived and executed. The full blast of the poet's satiric humour is, however, held in reserve until Southey himself appears and recites the 'spavin'd dactyls' of his *Vision* to the outraged ears of the assembled ghosts and archangels; it is satire in which every line transfixes its quarry. In this concluding scene, Byron scales the heights of the most exalted form of satire—that in which keen-edged, humorous portraiture is united with transcendent constructive and narrative art.

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[1] See Moore's *Life and Works of Lord Byron*, vol. XII, p. 277.

In *Don Juan*, the work upon which his literary powers were chiefly expended during his last five years in Italy (1818—23), Byron attains to the full disclosure of his personality and the final expression of his genius. It is impossible to quarrel with the poet's own description of it as an 'Epic Satire,' but, in the earlier cantos, at least, the satire is often held in suspense; in the 'Ave Maria' stanzas and the magnificent 'Isles of Greece' song, he gives free play to his lyricism, while, in his Juan-Haidée idyll, he fashions a love-romance as passionate as that of Romeo and Juliet and as virginal as that of Ferdinand and Miranda. In the sixteen thousand verses of *Don Juan*, every mood of Byron's complex and paradoxical nature is vividly reflected: here is the romanticist and the realist, the voluptuary and the cynic, the impassioned lover of liberty and the implacable foe of hypocrisy. And this variety of moods is accompanied by a no less remarkable variety of scenes. His hero is equally at home in camp and court; he suffers shipwreck and storms a fortress, penetrates the seraglio, the palace and the English country-house; and, true to his fundamental principle of obedience to nature, bears good and ill fortune with equal serenity.

In a letter to captain Medwin, Byron describes his poem as an epic—'an epic as much in the spirit of our day as the Iliad was in that of Homer.' But it is an epic without a plan, and, rightly speaking, without a hero. For Don Juan is little more than the child of circumstance, a bubble tossed hither and thither on the ocean of life, ever ready to yield to external pressure, and asserting his own will only in his endeavour to keep his head above water. Yet, *Don Juan* is a veritable *Comédie Humaine*, the work of a man who has stripped life of its illusions, and has learnt, through suffering and the satiety of pleasure, to look upon society with the searching eye of Chaucer and the pitilessness of Mephistopheles. In the comedy which is here enacted, some of the characters are great historic figures, others thinly veiled portraits of men and women who had helped to shape the poet's own chequered career, while others, again, are merely creatures of the imagination or serve as types of the modern civilisation with which Byron was at war.

In *Don Juan*, Byron, in the main, is content to draw his materials out of the rich resources of his own personal experience, and it was only when experience failed him that he drew upon books. In such cases, he proved a royal borrower. It is well known that his description of the shipwreck in canto II, and of the siege of Ismail in canto VIII—where he combines the realism of Zola with the irony of Swift in his most savage mood—is very largely drawn from the narratives of actual shipwrecks and sieges recorded by voyagers or historians. What is not so familiar is the fact that the whole *mise-en-scène*, together with many of the incidents, of Juan's adventures at the court of Catherine II of Russia, are drawn from Casti's satiric epic, *Il Poema Tartaro*[1], and materially add to Byron's indebtedness to the eighteenth century master of the *ottava rima*. In his early manhood, Casti had spent several years at the Russian court, and, in his satire, he describes, under the thinnest of topographical disguises, the career of an Irish adventurer, Tomasso Scardassale, who has escaped with a Turkish girl from the clutches of the caliph of Bagdad, and, arriving at Caracona (Petrograd), becomes the prime favourite of the empress Cattuna (Catherine II). The resemblance between the two poems is enhanced by the fact that many of the details in the siege of Ismail, and much of Byron's diatribe against war, find a close parallel in *Il Poema Tartaro*.

Judged as a work of art, *Don Juan* is well-nigh perfect. Byron's indebtedness to his Italian masters is almost as great in diction as in verse, but what he borrowed he made peculiarly his own; a bold imitator, he is himself inimitable. He is triumphantly successful in the art of harmonising manner to matter and form to spirit. His diction, in the main, is low-toned and conversational, as befits a poem in which digression plays an important part; but it is, at the same time, a diction which is capable of sustained elevation when occasion demands, or of sinking to bathos when the end is burlesque. No less remarkable is the harmony which is established between his diction and his verse; the astonishingly clever burlesque effects which he produces with his double and triple rimes lie equally within the provinces of diction and metre, while the epigrammatic gems with which his cantos are bestrewn gain half their brilliance by being set within the bounds of the couplet that rounds off the *ottava rima.*

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[1] The relation of *Don Juan* to *Il Poema Tartaro* was first pointed out by C. M. Fuess in his monograph, *Lord Byron as a Satirist in Verse*, 1912. Byron's indebtedness to Casti is, probably, even greater than Fuess thinks it wise to admit.

It is in Byron's digressions that the reader comes nearest to him. Swift and Sterne, each in his turn, had employed the digression with telling effect in prose narrative, but Byron was the first Englishman to make a free use of it in verse. Here, again, he was under the spell of the Italians, Pulci, Berni and Casti, though the wit and humour and caustic criticism of life which find a place in these digressions are all his own. In them, the dominant mood is that of mockery. Byron, indeed, would have us believe that

> if I laugh at any mortal thing,
> 'Tis that I may not weep;

but it would be idle to deny that, in these digressions, the motley of the jester, for him, was the only wear. Their very brilliance is a proof of the delight which their author found in girding at the world and waging war upon 'cant political, cant religious, cant moral.' Europe has long looked upon Byron as the inspired prophet of political liberty, but it is the Byron who wrote *The Prophecy of Dante* and who laid down his life in the cause of Greek freedom, rather than the author of *Don Juan*, that justly awakens this regard and evokes this homage. In his 'epic satire,' his criticism of life is almost wholly destructive. We take delight in his pitiless exposure of effete institutions and false ideals, and gladly acknowledge that the hammer-blows which he delivers at hypocrisy are as salutary in their effect as they are delightful to watch; but we must, at the same time, confess that he lacks the constructive genius of his friend and contemporary, Shelley, who sapped the foundations of society with equal resolution, but who razed only in order to rebuild.

CHAPTER III

SHELLEY

Two decades, approximately, separate the emergence of the younger group of the poets of this period, Byron, Shelley and Keats, from that of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Scott. To the elder group, all three were both deeply indebted and, in various subtle and intricate ways, akin. Yet, the younger group stand sharply and definitely apart; they are not merely of a younger generation but of a different age. The revolution, which had profoundly disturbed the elder poets, had, for the younger, already become history; the ideas and aspirations which Wordsworth and Coleridge first embraced and then did battle with, and which Scott consistently abhorred, had passed into the blood of Byron and Shelley, and kindled humanitarian ardours even in the artist Keats. And they are all, definitely, less English. Poetry, in their hands, loses almost entire touch with the national life and the historic traditions of England; nor was it mere accident that Shelley and Byron lived their best years, and produced their greatest poetry, in Italy, or that Keats, in his London suburb, sang of Endymion and the moon, of magic casements and perilous seas.

For the younger group were not merely less English; they were less near to nature, in a significant and far-reaching sense less natural. Existence, as such—the world as it is, with its ritual, or routine, of use and wont—was less characteristically the home and haunt of their imagination. To brood over the poetry of common things, to explore the workings of the untaught mind, to reanimate, for its own sake, the adventure and romance of the past, were no longer their inspiring aim. Nature, to Wordsworth, was a conservative ideal; but the ideals of freedom, beauty, love, which enthralled the imagination of Byron and Shelley and Keats became, in their hands, anarchic and revolutionary, challenging the old order, breaking down its classifications and limits, yet, in the case of the two younger poets, building up visionary fabrics controlled by the law of the spirit. And their very detachment from the despotism of fact enabled them to range more freely over existence than did their predecessors; they are more versatile; neglected treasures swim into their ken; nature and art, legend and romance, lose their old solitary and exclusive lure, to become the many-coloured woof of the living garment of beauty. That which for Wordsworth was, preeminently, if not exclusively, 'a living Presence of the Earth,' spoke to the imagination of Shelley and Keats no less from painting and sculpture, from the poetry of Greeks and Elizabethans and of Boccaccio and Dante, from the splendid creations of primeval myth. *Medusa* and the *Grecian Urn*, *Prometheus Unbound* and the sonnet *On sitting down to read King Lear once again*, *Isabella* and *The Triumph of Life*, *Endymion* and *Alastor*, mark, merely in conception and cast of subject, so many advances of the existing boundaries of English poetry.

Shelley and Keats were thus, for their generation, creators of beauty, as Wordsworth and Coleridge had been prophets of nature. But their vision of beauty was widely different. Shelley's vision is more metaphysical; beauty, for him, is 'intellectual,' a spirit living and working through the universe, and, ultimately, undistinguishable from the 'love' which 'sustains' it; the sensuous world, its 'veil,' discloses it, here and there, in pure, aspiring things—flowers, flame, heroic souls.

The Keatsian vision of beauty, on the other hand, is predominantly a rapturous exaltation of the senses—but of senses transfigured by imagination, so that they create as much as they perceive, making 'loveliness yet more lovely.'

Both the Shelleyan and the Keatsian vision of beauty are mirrored, finally, in the poetic instrument of expression itself, in their speech and verse. Image and personification, condemned by Wordsworth, reappear in unsurpassed subtlety and splendour. But both are masters, also, of a noble and passionate simplicity. And, in both, the inner rhythm of thought is accompanied and borne out by new and exquisite rhythms of musical verse. The songs of Shelley and the odes of Keats reach the summit of lyric achievement in English.

Percy Bysshe Shelley, born on 4 August 1792, at Horsham, came of a line of frequently notable Sussex squires. His imagination was early awake, but poetic power came relatively late. At Eton (1804—10), he wrote fluent Latin verse, hung entranced over the forbidden marvels of chemistry, stood up single-handed against fagging, and scribbled incoherent romances after Mrs Radcliffe

(*Zastrozzi, St Irvyne's*); there, too, he had that May morning vision of 'intellectual beauty' (*Hymn to Intellectual Beauty*, dedication to *The Revolt of Islam*) which 'burst his spirit's sleep,' and became, thenceforward, the 'master light of all his seeing.' The circumstances of his brief Oxford career, his expulsion and marriage with Harriet Westbrook (August 1811) are familiar, and need not be recalled. In January 1812, he wrote to Godwin, declaring himself 'the pupil of him under whose actual guidance my very thoughts have hitherto been arranged.' Godwin's sway, never entirely outgrown, over a mind remote from his own in gifts and temperament, was due to his political individualism and to his ethical determinism. The one appealed to Shelley's hatred of tyranny, the other to his passion for ideal unity. In *Queen Mab* (surreptitiously published 1813), his Godwinian creed is proclaimed from the mouths of legendary personages, inspired, as is their loose irregular verse, by the mythical epics of Southey. Shelley was soon to leave *Queen Mab* far behind; yet, its passionate sincerity, and the indefinable promise of genius in its very extravagances, make it very impressive. Some sections he, later, rehandled as *The Daemon of the World.* The following year (1814) saw the gravest crisis of his life. Its circumstances cannot be discussed here. Finding Harriet spiritually irresponsive, and believing her to have been unfaithful, he treated their marriage as dissolved, and, in July, left England with Mary Godwin. Neither the three months' tour through France and Switzerland, nor the succeeding winter and spring, bore any immediate literary fruit; but, during the autumn of 1815, he wrote, in the glades of Windsor, *Alastor*, his first authentic and unmistakable poem. The harsh notes and crude philosophy of *Queen Mab* are no longer heard; Southey has yielded place to Coleridge and Wordsworth, to the romantic chasm of *Kubla Khan*, and the visionary boy of *The Excursion.* The blank verse, too, is built upon the noble, plain music of Wordsworth, but with delicate suspensions and cadences and wayward undulations of his own. Yet, the mood and purport of this first genuine achievement of Shelley is one of frustration and farewell. His reform schemes had utterly failed, and he believed (on the strength of a medical report) that he was about to die. *Alastor* is the tragedy of the idealist who seeks in reality the counterpart of his ideal. In his preface, Shelley loftily condemns the idealist, but only to pronounce a sterner condemnation upon the multitude who live untroubled by generous delusions; and the final lines, some of the noblest he ever wrote, are penetrated with the forlornness of a world where 'many worms and beasts and men live on,' while 'some surpassing spirit' is snatched away, leaving to the survivors

> But cold despair and pale tranquillity,
> Nature's vast frame, the web of human things,
> Birth and the grave, that are not as they were.

To Shelley himself, 'Nature's vast frame' and 'the web of human things' were not only a source of consolation: they were a problem—a problem, however, of which he was assured that he had the key. Much of this autumn was occupied with attempts to set out in prose his philosophic convictions. The results remain in a series of unfinished prose essays: *On Love, On life, On a Future State, On Metaphysics, On Morals, On Christianity.* Neither as literature nor as speculation are they very remarkable; but they help to determine the character of Shelley's doctrines at a time when the Godwinian mould of his ideas, still almost untouched by the influence of either Spinoza or Plato, was already undergoing the implicit transmutation in his mind which familiarity with them, and especially with Plato, splendidly completed. His determinism remains, but is assuming a more and more idealist complexion. 'Necessity,' with Godwin a bulwark against miracles and freewill, was already, in *Queen Mab,* a sublime creation and harmonising power—'the mother of the world,' and life 'the great miracle.' Shelley believes, with Berkeley, that 'nothing exists but as it is perceived,' and reduces mind to a merely perceiving power; but, in another context, he can assert that man has 'a spirit within him at enmity with nothingness and dissolution.' And the Godwinian individualism is in sore peril when Shelley, in the same essay (*On life*), declares that '*I, you, they* are not signs of any actual difference,... but merely marks employed to denote the different modifications of the one mind.'

The author of these fragments was clearly ripe for Plato, and the ardent Greek studies of the following winter with Hogg and Peacock brought his later Platonism perceptibly nearer. The Swiss journey of the following summer (1816) was memorable for the beginning of his friendship with Byron. To these months of animated intercourse with a man of genius very unlike his own—discussions and readings in the villa Diodati, boat explorations in the footsteps of Julie and St Preux and much else—Shelley owed stimulus; but, not like Byron, a poetic new birth. The *Mont Blanc* stanzas and the *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty* mark no such sudden heightening of vision or matured power as do *Manfred* and the third canto of *Childe Harold* in comparison with all the writer had done before. Yet they express the Shelleyan idealism with a new loftiness of assurance, as of one who had found his dreams unassailably confirmed. The Alps, for Byron a symbol of nature's ruinous and savage force, were, for Shelley, the habitation of 'the secret Strength of Things Which governs thought and to the infinite dome of heaven is as a law' —a bond of union, like Wordsworth's Duty, between the visible universe and the ideal strivings of man.

The state of England during the winter which followed (1816—17) offered little support to this optimism. The overthrow of Napoleon had brought about, for the English working class, a period of intense and widespread misery. Reaction had triumphed, but the country had never been nearer to revolution. Shelley, settled with Mary at Marlow on Thames, coped energetically and generously with the need around him, pouring out his thoughts, meantime, in a great revolutionary epic. *Laon and Cythna* (later renamed *The Revolt of Islam*), the work of these summer months, is a brilliant dream-woof of poetry, in which are wrought figures, now purely allegoric, like the eagle and the snake—the evil and the noble cause—now symbolic, like the hero and the heroine themselves, who wage the eternal war of love and truth against tyranny. Shelley's boundless faith in the might of spiritual forces permeates and suffuses the whole poem, and to such a degree that the opposing and resisting powers remain shadowy and incredible. In vain the most savage tortures and, finally, death at the stake are inflicted upon Laon and Cythna; we seem to be onlookers at a visionary spectacle in which hate is impotent and pain dissolved in ecstasy. Not till *The Cenci* did Shelley, handling a real story, imagine with corresponding power the antagonist of his heroic spirit, and thus attain true and great drama. *The Faerie Queene*, which he read to Mary during these months, counted for something in the substance as well as in the form. Cythna is the woman warrior, a Britomart of heroic valour and impassioned purity; but her ideals are those of a more modern time; she seeks, like Mary Wollstonecraft, the intellectual liberation of her sex, and she is mated with Laon in a comradeship of sister spirits such as now bound Mary Wollstonecraft's daughter to Shelley. The tenderly intimate dedication to his wife nobly commemorates, also, her mother and her father.

Kindred impulses inspired the fragment *Prince Athanase*, written, likewise, at Marlow. Athanase is a Laon transposed—so far as the unfinished poem discloses—in a quieter key. The eternal warfare of the idealist must, in some sort, have been its theme, and the triumph of love its climax; but its most distinct pictures are not of bridal rapture or martyr ecstasy, but of philosophic converse between a young disciple and a 'divine old man' who has nurtured him in the 'soul-sustaining songs' of ancient Hellas and in the wisdom of the *Symposium.*

Yet, Shelley's personal history during these months would have excused a note of more unequivocal tragedy, a confidence less exalted in the final triumph of love. The chancery suit brought by the Westbrooks for the custody of his and Harriet's children threw him into an agony of apprehension. The threatened loss of the children touched him less acutely than the consequent ruin, as he deemed it, of their souls. Harriet's suicide towards the close of 1816 had affected him little. He had long ceased to love her, and the pathos of her miserable end failed to touch the springs of his flowing compassion. The cruelty of his situation makes the fierce stanzas *To the Lord Chancellor* impressive; but they are hardly great poetry. Before Lord Eldon's decree was pronounced, Shelley and Mary had resolved to leave the country. In March 1818, they set out for Italy. The stanzas *To William Shelley,* though probably written before, breathe the exultant joy and the ideal hope which qualified for them the regrets of exile.

Rosalind and Helen, begun at Marlow and finished next summer at the baths of Lucca, has caught little of this afflatus. It is a Shelleyan essay in the romantic tale to which Scott and Byron had lent a vogue. The influence of *Christabel* is often felt in the rhythm, but there is no archaism of style. Shelley calls it, indeed, 'a modern eclogue,' and he experiments, fitfully and somewhat awkwardly, with the familiar, colloquial manner which he was to make consonant with poetry in *Julian and Maddalo* and the *Gisborne* letter. In Italy, this manner grew steadily stronger and richer. The incidents of *Rosalind and Helen,* however, read like a bad dream of the Marlow days: Rosalind's child is ravished from her, Helen's lover fades and dies as Shelley and Mary believed was soon to be his own destiny. And the close, with its air of mellowed and assuaged suffering, and its sudden opulence of style, reads like an awakening amidst the radiance and the security of Italy.

> 'Lo, where red morning thro' the wood
> Is burning o'er the dew!'

says Rosalind, symbolically.

But the spell of Italy first becomes fully apparent in the poems written during this summer at Byron's villa near Este—a nest, after Shelley's own heart, on the jutting brink of a ravine commanding the Lombard plain, the Adriatic, the towers of Venice and Padua, the far-off Alps and Apennines and the flame-like Euganean peaks close at hand. Nature had here, at length, gone out to meet him, creating visibly before him a scene which might have been a projection of his imagination. *Lines written among the Euganean Hills* express the rapt mood of a mind 'wedded,' as Wordsworth's habitually, as Shelley's rarely, was, with 'this goodly universe'; his soul,

> which so long
> Darkened this swift stream of song,

grows one with the glowing noontide sky and with the flower glimmering at his feet. The experience is still strange to him and he half questions whether it be more than the visionary fancy of his mind 'peopling' a 'lone' and empty world. He stands in 'a flowering island' of the spirit; but round it surge 'the waters of wide Agony,' and he is soon to be adrift upon these waters again. In misery, he, like Tennyson, woos sorrow 'as a bride,' but with a half-playful sadness wholly his own. And even the 'unspeakable beauty of Naples,' deeply as it impressed him, could not exorcise the moods of deep dejection which found utterance in the poignant *Stanzas* written there. At Venice, on the other hand, where he renewed his old comradeship with Byron, the bitter cynicism of the elder poet called out in protest all Shelley's faith and hope for men. *Julian and Maddalo* gives a fascinating account, undoubtedly true in substance, of their intimate talk; and the memories of real debate which underlie it helped Shelley to a speech unwontedly natural and familiar, and to verse which gives full play to the free movement of conversational sentences, yet turns its freedom into ever fresh occasions for rhythmic beauty. In the maniac's story, recounted to the two poets, conversation, naturally, gives way to narrative; but, with the conversational tone, the easy grace also passes from the style, and the delicate variety of pause from the verse. In the previous year, Byron had made his first essay in the poetic-familiar, and his, too, was a Venetian story; but there is little affinity between the cynical and ironic gaiety of *Beppo* and Shelley's high-bred ease and charm, or between its smart metallic ringing rimes and Shelley's undulating music.

From Este, Shelley turned south once more, arriving, early in 1819, at Rome. Many vivid letters to Peacock and the *Stanzas written in dejection, near Naples* (December 1818), already mentioned, make the journey live for us. Since his arrival in Italy, he had brooded over the plan of a lyrical drama. Three subjects, Mrs Shelley reports, attracted him: Tasso, Job, Prometheus. Of the first two, only a fragment of *Tasso* remains; but the fact helps to define his line of approach to the one which he finally adopted and carried into execution. In all three, a noble character suffers grievous things at the hands, or by the consent, of a superior all-powerful will. There is tragedy, of varying quality, in the situation of all three. The sublime figure of Job, visited with immeasurable sufferings, but resisting all appeals to submission, alone in all literature matched the heroic grandeur of the Aeschylean Prometheus. But that this last subject finally prevailed is not surprising. Aeschylus had been his constant companion since he crossed the Alps, in the spring of the previous year. The typical Shelleyan situation—an ideal hero confronting a tyrant—was far more unequivocally present in the Prometheus story than in the rest. And this story offered an opening for the doctrine, yet more intimately Shelleyan, of love as the central principle of things and the key to the ideal future of humanity. The figure of Prometheus had appealed powerfully to other idealists of the revolutionary age. Goethe, in his storm and stress phase, had seen in him the human creator, shaping men in his own image and scorning God; and Beethoven found noble music for the theme. To Byron, in 1816, he was a symbol of the divineness, the heroic endurance and the 'funereal destiny' of man. To Shelley, also, he stood for man creating and enduring, endowing the gods themselves with wisdom and strength, and suffering their vindictive rage. But, for Shelley, no symbol of humanity could suffice which excluded the perfected man of the future he confidently foresaw. Aeschylus had made Prometheus finally surrender to Jupiter, and become reconciled with him. This conclusion was, to Shelley, intolerable.

> The moral interest of the fable [he declares] would be annihilated if we could conceive him unsaying his high language, and quailing before his successful and perfidious adversary.

The story thus had to undergo a radical transformation to fit it to Shelley's boundless faith in the perfectibility of man. His Godwinian creed had, in this respect, undergone no abatement whatever. Pain, death and sin were transitory ills. Religion, too, man would necessarily outgrow, for the gods were phantoms devised by his brain. A Prometheus who should symbolise humanity thus conceived necessarily triumphed; there was even danger lest his adversary's overthrow—at bottom, a fight with a figment—should appear too certain and too easy. And this danger was not diminished by the specifically Shelleyan traits which transformed the substance without altering the outline of Godwinian man, and changed the being of pure reason into the being of absolute love; making earth no mere source of human utilities, but the mother 'interpenetrated' in every pore of her granite mass with love like his own. The sublime doctrine of love was foreign to Aeschylus and to Greek myth, no less than to Godwin; but the legend which made Prometheus the son of Earth provided Shelley with a pregnant symbol for his thought. The earth-born Titan must partake of the spirit of love which pervades the earth. Even towards his enemy Jupiter, he cannot, therefore, be implacable. Yet, since Jupiter stands for the power of evil which it is his task and destiny to destroy, he cannot be placated. The allegorical and the literal sense thus thrust the story in different directions. Prometheus acts, in part, as the spirit of love, hating, *ipso facto*, the spirit of hate, and ruthlessly pursuing it to its doom; in part, as the sublime Christ-like sufferer, who wishes 'no living thing to suffer pain,' and will not curse even his persecutor. In the great first act, hanging in torture on the cliffs of Caucasus, he seeks to recall the curse upon Jupiter which he had once pronounced, and to which all nature had listened appalled. But he will not disclose the secret which alone can avert Jupiter's ruin. To the threats and arguments of Mercury—in the most Aeschylean and least undramatic scene of the poem—and to the torments of the furies, he remains inflexible. The catastrophe accordingly follows; Jupiter topples from his throne, as it were, at a touch; indeed, the stroke of doom is here so instantaneous and so simple as to be perilously near the grotesque. Jupiter's fall is the signal for the regeneration, no less instantaneous, of humanity; man's evil nature slips off like a slough; Prometheus is 'unbound.'

But this symbolism leaves the character of Prometheus incompletely portrayed. To be chained and set free is but a slender portion of his suffering or of his joy. His keenest pangs—the last resource of the furies when other torments fail—are of the soul, pity for the sufferings of other men, and, worse than blood and fire. pity for their deadly apathy:

> Hypocrisy and Custom make their minds
> The fanes of many a worship now outworn.
> They dare not devise good for man's estate,
> And yet they know not that they do not dare.

And, as his pains are spiritual, so, while he is still bound, are his joys. The earth, his mother, sends the spirits of heroes and martyrs to cheer him; lovely phantasmal shapes of faith and hope hover round him; and he knows that there awaits him, still afar and invisible, his bride, Asia, the spirit of love in nature—'Lamp of the earth,' 'whose footsteps pave the world with light'—but whose transforming presence will fade 'unless it be mingled with his own.' The love that is 'blindly wove through all the web of being' is incomplete until the love that pervades nature has also triumphed in man made 'one harmonious soul of many a soul.' Long before that blissful hour arrived, nature and man had mingled in the glowing speech of poetry; into her 'golden chalice,' when his being overflowed, he poured the 'bright wine' of his impassioned thought. Such moments Prometheus remembers, though Asia is afar, and 'vain all hope but love.'

Prometheus has thus, from the first, 'great allies'; even when anguish is loudest, a hushed rapture of expectation is not far off. Everything in the drama seems to support the faith of Shelley's most exalted hours, that love, even here and now, is the substance of things, and evil a phantasmal shadow. In such hours, we know, it was written: the vigorous awakening of the Roman spring around him as he wrote, and 'the new life with which it drenches the spirits even to intoxication, were the inspiration of this drama'; The speech is almost everywhere lyrical in temper where not in form, and the ardour of Shelley suffuses itself into the atmosphere, compelling even the forces of evil to speak in accents like his, as if secretly persuaded of the fatuity of their own cause. Jupiter speaks in lovely images of stars and sun, as if he, too, were a lover of Asia, the lamp of earth; the fury, in the very act of tormenting Prometheus, speaks as one who herself suffers what she inflicts.

Finally, in the fourth act, added as an afterthought, some months later, this implicit lyricism becomes a sustained rapture of song. Considered as the closing act of a drama, it is otiose, for it adds nothing to the action; but it is rather to be regarded as the final movement of a symphony; a completion necessary in the logic of emotion, though superfluous in the logic of event. In the great choric songs of the earth and the moon, and in the triumphant strains of the hours and the spirits of the mind, Shelley reaches the sublimest note of his lyric. No modern poet has come nearer than he to making 'the morning stars sing together.' Almost all his other modes of song, from the simplest to the most intricate, are to be found in the earlier acts; and on the deep organ tone of Demogorgon, proclaiming that love and wisdom and endurance are of the eternal truth of things, the poem closes.

Prometheus Unbound is not to be judged as an essay in the philosophy of progress; but neither is it to be treated merely as a tissue of lovely imagery and music. Shelley's ardour, fortified and misled by the cold extravagances of Godwin, hurried him over the slow course of social evolution. He conceived both the evil in human nature and the process of overcoming it with strange, sublime simplicity. But the ideal of love and endurance, which he sees fulfilled by regenerated man, stands on a different plane; it is rooted in existing human nature, and expresses a state towards which all genuine progress must advance. And, when he portrays the universe as at one with the moral strivings of man, he is uttering no fugitive or isolated extravagance, but the perennial faith of idealists in all ages. Under forms of thought derived from the atheist and materialist Godwin, Shelley has given, in *Prometheus Unbound*, magnificent expression to the faith of Plato and of Christ.

Though written at Rome, *Prometheus* does not bear any direct trace of its origin. Any other flowering glades than those that crowned the baths of Caracalla, and any other glowing Italian sky, would have provided a like intoxicating *milieu*. Nor was Shelley easily accessible to the specific traditions and character of Rome. It was no city of the soul for him, as for Byron, but a beautiful tomb, 'where empires and religions lie buried in the ravage they have wrought'; and neither Vergil nor Lucretius, nor Lucan—a name more honoured by Shelley than either—availed to endear to him the metropolis of papacy. But one tradition of modern Rome had, since his arrival in Italy, moved his deepest interest. The story of Beatrice Cenci, in a form, as is now known, more favourable to her than history warrants, was universally current among the Roman populace, and 'not to be mentioned in Roman society without awakening a deep and breathless interest.' Guido's portrait of Beatrice, in the Colonna palace, heightened Shelley's passionate sympathy with her personality. Her story was already a tragedy, and 'nothing remained, as I imagined, but to clothe it to the apprehensions of my countrymen in such language and action as would bring it home to their hearts.' To bring his thoughts and convictions home to the hearts of his countrymen had never been an aim foreign to Shelley; but he had never, as now, subordinated his own artistic bent and technique to this aim. Though distrustful of his power to write a drama for the stage, he yet chose this incomparable means of popular appeal; and he held his visionary imagination in severe control, avoiding all 'mere poetry,' and using a speech which differs from the 'familiar language of men' only in its nobler, more classical, simplicity. That Shelley, after a few weeks' interval, could carry out, with unfaltering hand, and with supreme success, a poetic transition not less astonishing than would have been the appearance of *Samson Agonistes* on the morrow of *Comus*, marks his will power no less than his imaginative range.

The central theme and situation of *The Cenci* are still, it is true, the heroic resistance to tyranny, of all situations the most kindling to Shelley. It is no longer a mythic symbol, however, but an actual event. And the chief actor and sufferer is a woman. Shelley, by merely following the lead of his own ardent and indignant sympathy, struck out a tragic type in effect new, and to none of the great masters stranger than to Shakespeare himself. Euripides, Sophocles, Massinger, Webster had nobly handled the tragedy of heroic womanhood; but neither Medea nor Antigone, nor Vittoria, nor Dorothea, nor the duchess of Malfi anticipated Beatrice Cenci in her way of meeting an intolerable wrong. She strikes down the criminal, not with the fierce vengeance of a Medea, but as the instrument of divine justice—

> Because my father's honour did demand
> My father's life.

This is the Shelleyan magnanimity, and Shelley found no hint of it in his source. But he wove into her character every positive trait that it supplied; his Beatrice, therefore, with all her ideal greatness of soul, is no abstraction, but an Italian girl, with flashing moods and impulses. She thinks, in her agony, of suicide—Lucretia's remedy—before she finds her own; she is as sure as Antigone that her guilt is innocence, yet fights her accusers with the rare cunning of an advocate; she confronts the faltering murderers with more than the fierce energy of Lady Macbeth, yet has her moment of a young girl's anguish at the thought of passing for ever from the sunshine into a 'wide, grey, lampless, deep, unpeopled world.' Analysis may pronounce this or that trait inconsistent; but the qualified reader will feel himself in the grip of a character of Shakespearean richness of texture, irradiated through and through by a flawless splendour of soul.

If Beatrice recalls Greek, as well as Elizabethan, analogies, count Cenci is of the race of the Barabbases and Volpones who mark the extremest divergence of Elizabethan from Greek tragedy. Yet, he is drawn with a reticence of which no Elizabethan would have been capable, and the horror of his act is so far mitigated that its motive is hate, not lust. He has moments almost of sublimity, in which his hate appears a tragic doom:

> The act I think shall soon extinguish all
> For me: I bear a darker deadlier gloom
> Than the earth's shade, or interlunar air;

or in which he imagines his piled wealth making a flaming pyre out in the wide Campagna; which done,

> My soul, which is a scourge, will I resign
> Into the hands of him who wielded it.

The Cenci owes more to Shelley's intense self-projection into a real story profoundly sympathetic to him than to conscious imitation of any master or school. If the Elizabethans were most in his mind, the absorbing interest for him of the person and the fate of his heroine checked any disposition to diffuseness of plot or luxury of style. No secondary interest gets foothold for a moment; the mother and brothers, even the hapless Bernardo, are distinctly, if faintly, drawn; but their fate hardly moves us beside that of Beatrice. And, if the Greeks, too, were in his mind, the same passionate championship effectually overcame any Hellenic disposition to find a relative justification for both contending parties. Cenci was beyond apology; but a blindly scrupulous, instead of a basely mercenary, pope would have strengthened the play.

And a play Shelley did, in fact, intend it to be. In Beatrice Cenci, he actually had in mind the great tragic actress Eliza O'Neill, and, in sending the MS to the lessee of Covent Garden, intimated his desire that she should play it. Harris, as was inevitable, declined the proposal, but invited its author to write a play for him on some other subject.

Shelley was already, however, absorbed in other tasks. 'I have deserted the odorous gardens of literature,' he wrote, 'for the great sandy desert of politics.' From that 'desert,' in truth, he had never averted his ken. And the provocation to enter it was now unusually great. Popular hostility to the government, fomented by the horrors of the factory system, the oppressiveness of the corn laws and the high-handed toryism of the ministry, had, in 1819, become acute. The Peterloo affair (16 August) roused Shelley's fierce indignation, and, in brief serried stanzas as of knotted whipcord, he lashed the man whom he chose to hold responsible for the threatened revolution. *The Masque of Anarchy* is much more, however, than a derisive arraignment of the arch-'anarch' Castlereagh. Of Shelley's finest vein of poetry, it contains few hints; but, without it, we should more unreservedly discredit his sense for the realities of a free national life. From the visionary freedom of *Prometheus*, this practical and attainable freedom of the 'comely table spread' and the 'neat and happy home' is as far removed as is the human tragedy of the Cenci palace from the mythic pangs of the pale sufferer on Caucasus. The publication, the same autumn, of Wordsworth's *Peter Bell* (written in 1798) drew an outburst of sardonic mockery, not the less bitter for its sportive form, upon the tory poet. It had already been reviewed by Hunt (whose notice Shelley read 'with great amusement') and parodied by J. H. Reynolds. In *Peter Bell the Third*, Shelley attacks at once the reactionary politician and the 'dull' poet, but the reactionary who had once hailed with rapture the 'dawn' of the revolution, and the dull poet who had once stood on the heights of poetry. And the two indictments, for Shelley, hung together. Wordsworth was dull because he had been false to his early ideals. To convey this by identifying the poet with Peter Bell, his own symbol of the dull man, was an ingenious satiric device and not unfair retribution. Under cover of it, moreover, Shelley delivers (in part IV) some shafts of criticism which illuminate as well as pierce, and he can pointedly recall the older Wordsworth who made songs

> on moor and glen and rocky lake
> And on the heart of man.

In the most elaborate of these satires, on the other hand, the quasi-Aristophanic drama *Swellfoot the Tyrant* (1820), on the scandal of George IV and the queen, Shelley's humour crackles drearily. Its hideous symbolism is unredeemed.

In the meantime (January 1820), the Shelleys had moved to Pisa, their home, with occasional intervals by the sea or in the mountains, for the next two years. His vaster poetic schemes during the first of these years fell into the background; *Prometheus* and *The Cenci* had no successors. But he was himself in the full tide of growth; in lyric, at least, he now showed a finished mastery which, even in his great lyric drama, he had not always reached; and he struck out upon fresh and delightful adventures. In *The Sensitive Plant*, the loveliness of an Italian flower garden in spring, and its autumn decay, inspired a Shelleyan myth, akin in purport to *Alastor*, but with a new, delicate plasticity, like that of the contemporary *Skylark*. His flowers, commonly impressionist hints of colour and perfume, are now finely articulated and characterised; they are Shelleyan flowers, but, like those of Shakespeare, they are, recognisably, nature's too. In 'the sensitive plant' itself, Shelley found a new symbol for his own 'love of love,' 'companionless,' like the poet in *Alastor* and the 'one frail form' of *Adonais*; and, as in *Adonais*, the mood of lament at the passing of beauty and the seeming frustration of love merges in a note of assurance, here not ecstatic but serene, that beauty and love are, in reality, the eternal things. The anapaestic verse is nearer than any other to that of *Christabel*; it lent itself with, perhaps, excessive ease to the fluid undulations of Shelley's rhythms, but he discovers in it new and exquisite effects.

The Witch of Atlas is a more airily playful essay in poetic myth-making. Imagined on a solitary mountain climb, after days spent in translating the delightful rogueries of the Homeric *Hymn to Mercury*, *The Witch* is a hymn in kindred vein: the deeper harmonies of his thought and aspiration transposed into blithe irresponsible fancy and dainty arabesque. But poetry it remains, despite some menace of the mock-heroic at the outset, and of satire at the end. The *ottava rima* which Shelley uses here, as for his *Hymn to Mercury*, had, for centuries, been the accepted measure, in Italian, of playful poetry; and Byron had lately adopted it for the epic mockery of *Don Juan*.

Tradition and example helped to suspend here the 'shrill' and 'intense' notes of Shelley's poetry; but they set no check upon the wayward loveliness of his music and imagery. To his wife, as is well known, the poem did not appeal; it could have no apter prelude than the charming 'apology' in which he bids her

> prithee for this one time
> Content thee with a visionary rhyme.

A few other experiments in narrative of the same time—*A Vision of the Sea*, *Orpheus*, *Cosimo and Fiordispina*—open up alluring glimpses of beauty, but, on the whole, confirm the impression that story with difficulty sustained itself in Shelley's imagination unless it partook of the tone and temper of lyric. The first-named is a kind of Shelleyan *Ancient Mariner*, woven of beauty and horror, but less 'visionary,' in the sense which troubled Mrs Shelley, than *The Witch of Atlas*; and the anapaests crash and surge—a new potency in a metre of which only the liquid melodious lilt had appeared to be known to the poet of *The Cloud* and *The Sensitive Plant*. Shelley's passion for the sea was beginning to impress his poetry.

These adventures in poetic tale, however, even when highly fortunate, like *The Witch*, did not draw their inspiration from the depths of Shelley's nature. They were experiments in artistry, exercises of his now ripe expressive power. But his artistry was also summoned to the service of his political and social ideals. The revolutionary fervour which, in the previous year, had provoked his satires and squibs, now clothes itself in the intricate rhythms of the Pindaric ode. The odes *To Naples* and *To Liberty* contain splendid bursts of poetry, such as epode I B of the first, and the Athens stanza (V) of the second; but do not, as complete poems, overcome the obstacle to poetry presented by the abstract and political themes from which he set out. The *Ode to the West Wind*, on the other hand, originates directly in that impassioned intuition which is the first condition of poetry; the wild autumn wind sweeping through the forest possesses his imagination and becomes a living symbol of the spiritual forces which regenerate the fading or decadent life of nations, bring succour and 'alliance' to forlorn heroic spirits, and scatter their burning words, 'like ashes from an unextinguished hearth,' among mankind. Nowhere does Shelley's voice reach a more poignantly personal note or more perfect spontaneity. Yet, this ode is no less his masterpiece in calculated symmetry of structure, matching here the artistry of Keats's *Grecian Urn* or *Autumn*. The 'Titan in a virgin's form' (so Leopardi called him) finds consummate utterance in this great song, where we hear together the forlorn wail and the prophetic trumpet-blast. The symbolism, here, is too individual and too passionate to resemble the instinctive rendering of natural phenomena in terms of conscious life, which we call 'myth.' But, much of Shelley's loveliest lyric, as has often been observed, does provoke this comparison. *Arethusa*, and the *Hymns* of *Apollo* and *Pan*, are of a serene and radiant beauty almost untouched by the personal note, whether of pathos or of prophecy. And, in *The Cloud*, Shelley quits the guidance of Greek divinities, and, with superb and joyous ease, makes myth for himself. There is nothing esoteric in this cloud's life; all the familiar aspects of the cloud which 'changes but cannot die' are translated by a kind of brilliant poetic wit into plastic image. Hence, in part, its universal appeal. In *The Skylark*, closely akin in the entrancing swiftness and subtlety of its music, the temper is wholly unlike. The skylark is divine, as the cloud is immortal; but, instead of personating it, the poet looks up with wistful longing to its 'clear keen joyance,' its love which had never known love's sad satiety. The brief, quivering pulsations of the verse contrast with the superb, pacing measure of *The Cloud*.

The second year at Pisa (1821) brought new friendships and interests; and Shelley's poetry, henceforth, is more largely coloured, or even inspired, by personal intimacy. The *Letter to Maria Gisborne*, of the preceding August, had commemorated a purely intellectual friendship. Unlike Pope's *Epistle to Arbuthnot*—its only rival among English letters in verse—it 'imitates' neither Horace nor anyone else, but, on the contrary, reveals, with transparent and spontaneous frankness, the Shelley of sparkling and sprightly converse, of fun shot through with poetry, and poetry with fun, of human thoughtfulness, and keen common-sense, whom only his best friends knew. *Epipsychidion, Adonais* and the lyrics written to Jane Williams are monuments of kinds of friendship more passionate and more individually Shelleyan, yet as diverse as the poetry which enshrines them. Shelley had lately translated the *Symposium* of Plato. In Emilia Viviani, he thought he saw realised the visionary beauty which, from 'youth's dawn,' had beckoned and whispered to him in all the wonder and romance of the world. A similar apparition had, at least once before, crossed his path, in the wife whom he still sincerely, if not passionately, loved. The situation was complex, and not in all its aspects favourable to poetry. The rejected fragments show that he did not without effort refrain from the mere defiant bravado of one facing a groundless or specious charge. In what remains, nothing is ignoble, nothing prosaic; but the passages in which he is explaining and justifying are distinguished by their plainer phrasing from those in which, as in the rapturous close, he soars, with beating wings, above earth and its laws and limits to pierce into the rare universe of love. The Godwinian doctrine of free love is, doubtless, discernible, on a last analysis, in the justification; but that doctrine is taken up into the sublime Platonic faith that love permeates the universe, and cannot, therefore, be completely mirrored in the facet of any one human form. Thus, in defending his passion for Emilia, Shelley is led to an argument which cuts away the ground of the exclusive and absorbing adoration of her which much of his language suggests. She is no mere symbol; her womanhood and her beauty are real; but beauty more universal and enduring than her own is gathered up in her, as light in the sun, and this ideal value, though the emphasis fluctuates, is never absent from Shelley's thought. Yet, the comparison which he invokes with the *Vita Nuova* is not wholly just; the virginal passion of Dante repudiates every suggestion of union, even in marriage; while Shelley's spiritual passion finds adequate utterance only in the rapt imagery of possession.

The romance of Emilia Viviani had a somewhat sordid sequel, and Shelley felt the bitterness of disillusionment. But illusion had brought him thought, vision and song, which were not illusory. *Epipsychidion* enshrines a rare and strange mode of feeling, accessible only to the few ; we pass, nevertheless, into a larger air when we turn from this Platonist bridal hymn to the great elegy with which, a few weeks later, he commemorated the death of Keats. The two poets had never been intimate, and neither thought of the other's poetry, as a whole, so highly as it deserved. But Shelley put *Hyperion* on a level with the grandest poetry of his time. Grief for a dead friend has hardly more part in *Adonais* than in *Lycidas*; but it is, in a far greater degree, an impassioned lament for a poet. The death of Edward King gave Milton an occasion for a meditation of unequalled splendour upon poetic fame ; the death of Keats is felt by Shelley as a calamity for poetry, and for everything in nature and humanity to which poetry gives enduring expression, and the very soul of poetry seems to utter itself, now in sorrow, now in retributive indignation, through his lips. It is something more than literary artifice, or the example of antique elegy, that leads him to picture muses and seasons, dreams, desires and adorations, joining in his lament.

> All he had loved and moulded into thought
> From shape and hue and odour and sweet sound
> Lamented Adonais;

and, Adonais being, for Shelley, chiefly the poet of *Hyperion*, his chief mourner is the heavenly muse Urania. Even the persons who are represented beside his grave, Byron, Hunt, Moore, Shelley himself, are there not as friends but as fellow-poets. The stately Spenserian stanza, to which Shelley communicates a new magnificence of his own, accords well with the grandeur of the theme. Solitary as he was, and echoless as his song, for the moment, remained, he knew that he was speaking out of the heart of humanity, and not merely 'antheming a lonely grief.' And, in the triumphant closing movement, he gave expression more sublime than either Milton or any ancient elegist had found, to the immortality of poetry. The poet, like the lover, could transcend the limits of personality, and become at one with eternal things.

It was in the spirit of these magnificent vindications of poet and lover, and during the interval between them, that Shelley wrote (February—March 1821) his memorable *Defence of Poetry*. Peacock's essay, *The Four Ages of Poetry*, in Ollier's *Literary Miscellany*, 1820, had stirred him to a 'sacred rage' by representing the revival of imagination, in his day, as a futile reversion to the infantine culture of primitive man. Not poetry alone, as ordinarily understood, but ethics, the very meaning of conduct, of history, nay, of life itself, was, for Shelley, at stake; and his *Defence* ranges far beyond the scope of literature. Poetry reveals the order and beauty of the universe; it is impossible without imagination and without love, and these are the secret, also, of all goodness, of all discovery, of all creation. 'A man to be greatly good, must imagine intensely and comprehensively... the great secret of morals is love.' The *Defence* is a noble statement not only of Shelley's own poetic ideals, but (despite some ambiguity of expression) of what is most poetic in poetry at large.

In the flights of lovely song which came from Shelley during the later Pisan time, and the three months by the Spezzian bay which followed, the note of magnificent confidence which sounds in the close of *Adonais*, and in the *Defence*, is more rarely heard. Most of them are inspired by his tender intimacy with Jane Williams; a 'desire of the moth for the star,' which touched even the happiest of them with the sense of futility. Frailty and evanescence are now the lot of all lovely things. The flower that smiles today, tomorrow dies; the light of the shattered lamp lies dead in the dust; the spirit of delight is a rare visitor. And these thoughts are enshrined in verse of a like impalpable tenuity, unsubstantial as a rose-petal, and floating on a subtler, more tremulous and evasive music. For the splendid rhythmical sweep of *The Cloud*, we have the plaintive suspensions and resumptions of the music of *When the lamp is shattered.* Here and there, as in *Lines to Edward Williams* ('The serpent is shut out from Paradise'), the plaintiveness becomes a bitter cry, or, again, it gives way to playful charm, as in *Aziola*; only the *Lines on Napoleon's death* ('What! alive and so bold, O Earth?') have a resonant and ringing music. With this requiem, blended of anger and admiration, for the fallen conqueror, was published the lyrical drama *Hellas*, inspired by the Greek war of liberation. *Hellas* is, indeed, a prolonged lyric, conveyed partly through dialogue as impassioned as the choric songs. The famous last chorus is the noblest example of Shelley's command, when he chose, of a classic simplicity and close-knit strength of speech. The unfinished drama *Charles I*, which occupied much of the later months at Pisa, shows, further, at moments, his advance in genuine dramatic power. Charles and Henrietta are more alive than other characters with whom Shelley was in closer sympathy, and whom he could make the mouthpiece of his own political animus and ideas.

In April, the Pisan circle broke up, and Shelley, eager for the sea, settled, with Mary, and Edward and Jane Williams, in a lonely mansion, Casa Magni, on the wild Spezian bay. Several of the lyrics to Jane were written here, but his central preoccupation was the uncompleted *Triumph of Life.* Petrarch, in his *Trionfi,* had portrayed men subjugated by love, chastity, time. For Shelley, life itself, the 'painted veil' which obscures and disguises the immortal spirit, is a more universal conqueror, and, in vision, he sees this triumphal chariot pass, 'on the storm of its own rushing splendour,' over the captive multitude of men. Dante, rather than Petrarch, has inspired the conduct of the vision, where Rousseau, the darkened light whence a thousand beams had been kindled, interprets, like Vergil, to the rapt and questioning poet. Much of the symbolism is obscure, but the significant allusion to the *Paradiso*—

> the rhyme
> Of him who from the lowest depths of hell
> Through every Paradise and through all glory
> Love led serene, and who returned to tell
> The words of hate and awe—the wondrous story
> How all things are transfigured except Love—

justifies the surmise that love, which arms heroic spirits against the sway of life, was, in some way, to win the final triumph. The *terza rima* is very nobly handled, with a dominant fluidity which is more Petrarchian than Dantesque, but with moments of concentrated brevity which belong to the greater model. And the passionate outlook upon life which pervades and informs it marks Shelley's kinship. The sequel, doubtless, would have added clearness to a poem which remains one of the grandest, but by no means the least enigmatic, among the torsos of modern poetry.

The Triumph of Life was the occupation of summer days spent afloat with Williams, on the Spezian bay. On 8 July, Shelley's boat was run down, it is said deliberately, in a sudden squall. His ashes, by the care of Trelawny, were buried in the protestant cemetery at Rome, side by side with those of the great brother-poet whose requiem he had sung, and whose poetry had been his companion in the hour of death.

A century has almost passed, and Shelley is still the subject of keener debate than any of his poetic contemporaries, not excepting Byron. That he is one of the greatest of lyric poets is eagerly allowed by his most hostile critics; the old grounds, too, of hostility to him have, in the main, long since spent their malice, or count on his side; while some, which cannot be dismissed, are irrelevant to a final estimate of his poetry. But many who feel the spell of his 'lovely wail' are repelled by his 'want of substance'; Matthew Arnold's 'ineffectual angel' 'pinnacled dim in the intense inane' expresses, for them, the whole truth about the poet and about the man. And a part of the truth it undoubtedly does express. No stranger apparition ever visited that robust matter-of-fact Georgian England than this 'frail form,' of whom, at the outset, Hazlitt might have said with yet more truth than of Coleridge, that he 'had wings but wanted hands and feet.' Only, while Coleridge's wing 'flagged' more and more 'wearily' (as Shelley said), Shelley grew steadily, not only in power of flight, but in his living hold, both as poet and as man, upon certain orders of fact. His 'strangeness' was a part (not the whole) of his originality; and he paid its price. To most of what was complex, institutional, traditional in his *milieu*, he remained inaccessible, intransigent; he could not, like Wordsworth, find his 'home' in these things, still less find it a 'kindred-point' with his 'heaven.' For Shelley, society was rather the ground from which (like his *Skylark*) he soared to a heaven far remote; or, to use his yet more splendid image, the 'dome of many-coloured glass' beyond which he strove to project himself into a white radiance of eternity. As Bradley has aptly remarked, he forgot, not always but often, that the white radiance itself persists transformed in the many colours. That pure and intense aspiration, however, is the first note of Shelley's authentic poetry. It would not be authentic, it would hardly be memorable, if it merely expressed aspirations, however ideal and intense; but the expression itself is already creative and new. Shelley's mature verse and diction do not merely serve as a channel for his thought and feeling: the temper of his spirit penetrates and suffuses their very texture, evoking spontaneous felicities of rhythm and phrase, which are beautiful in their own right as well as by their subtle symbolism. Of all the poets of his time, Shelley's style carries us furthest from the close-packed, tessellated brilliance, the calculated point and precision, of the Augustans; to describe it we have to recur to images drawn from the undulating contours of waves, the pure intensity and splendour of flame. During the last years of his short life, his soaring idealism abated nothing of its ardour; but he found in the actual world of nature and of man more varied intimations of the 'Life of Life' they veiled, and his poetry, within its range, acquired a piercing and profound human truth without losing its unearthly beauty. The most 'subjective' of modern English poets created our one great modern English tragedy. And the most 'romantic' of them had, almost alone, the secret of a truly 'classical' simplicity; a speech nobly bare, even austere, familiar without banality, poetic without artifice. Some kinds of poetic experience, and those not the least vital, he expresses with a delicate precision not less than that of the 'subtle soul'd psychologist' Coleridge; and he is sometimes most precise when he appears, to the ordinary reader, most 'vague.' And, while the philosophic beliefs of Coleridge hardly touch his poetry, and were deeply coloured by the interests of the theologian and the political theorist, the ultimate metaphysic of Shelley is the articulate interpretation of his most intense poetic vision, and vitally supplements, where it does not rudely traverse, the dogmas of his 'atheistic' or 'democratic' creed. To all readers, Shelley will remain the consummate inventor of lyric harmonies. To some, he will be not less precious for the glimpses given, in *Adonais* and in *The Defence of Poetry*, of a doctrine of universal being more consonant than any other with the nature of poetry.

CHAPTER IV

KEATS

JOHN KEATS was born on 29 or 31 October 1795, the eldest son of a livery-stable keeper in Finsbury Pavement, London. Sent, as a child of eight, to a school at Enfield, he attracted the interest and, before long, the devoted friendship, of the junior master, Charles Cowden Clarke, to whom he owed his first initiation into poetry. About 1813, Clarke read to the young surgeon's apprentice Spenser's *Epithalamion*, and put into his hands *The Faerie Queene.* In phrases as indispensable to the portrayer of Keats as those of Hogg to the biographer of Shelley, Clarke tells us how

> he went thro' it as a young horse thro' a spring meadow ramping.... Like a true poet, too, he specially singled out epithets,... he hoisted himself up, and looked burly and dominant, as he said, 'What an image that is,—"sea-shouldring whales."'

His earliest extant poem (1813) was an *Imitation of Spenser.* Yet, Spenser was to count for less in his poetry than other Elizabethans to whom Spenser led him—Fletcher, Browne and Chapman; and it was the arresting experience of 'first looking into Chapman's Homer' that prompted, early in 1815, his earliest outburst of great song. The writings of Leigh Hunt added an influence kindred, in some points, to these, and quickened, from the summer of 1816, by the spell of personal friendship. At Hunt's Hampstead cottage, Keats met Hazlitt, Haydon and Shelley. The former two won his deep admiration; Hazlitt's 'depth of taste' and Haydon's pictures he declared to be, with *The Excursion,* 'the three things to rejoice in in this age,' a dictum which, in each point, foreshadows a riper Keats than his poetry at this date betokens. His first volume of poems, issued in 1817, is still impressed, both for better and for worse, with the influence of Hunt. For better, since Keats could still learn much from his Ariosto-like charm and ease, and especially from his revival of the flexible mode of the rimed couplet; for worse, since Hunt's faults of looseness and bad taste were, for Keats, still insidious and infectious. The volume marks the swiftness of his upward flight. Between the stanzas *To some Ladies* and *I stood tiptoe* or *Sleep and Poetry*, the distance is enormous, and Hunt's was the most powerful of the external forces which concurred with the most potent of all, his own ripening vision of beauty and truth. This vision of beauty, steadily growing richer as well as purer and more intense, inspires *Sleep and Poetry*, a noble prelude and forecast of his own future song. Still a young neophyte—'not yet a glorious denizen of the heaven of poesy'—he derides, with boyish emphasis, the mechanic practitioners who 'wore its mark.' Keats was only renewing in fiery verse, when the battle was far advanced, the challenge with which, in his prose preface, Wordsworth had opened the affray. But Wordsworth had plainly helped him, also, to grasp the ideal task of the poet, and, thus, to formulate his own poetic aims. In *Tintern Abbey*, the older poet had looked back upon the ecstasies of his youthful passion for nature with a mind which had already reached a 'sublimer mood', responsive to the burden and mystery of the world. Keats finds in that retrospect the clue to his own forecast. He, too, will pass from the region of thoughtless joy—the realm of Flora and old Pan, where he chose each pleasure that his fancy saw—to 'the agonies, the strife of human hearts'; for this he already knows to be 'the nobler life.' But the parallel, though real, must not be too closely pressed. Keats was no disciple even of Wordsworth; he forged his own way, and his vision of beauty, even in its present immature stage, is far richer and more various than can be ascribed to the Wordsworth of 1793. Apart from his greater opulence of sensation, he draws a delight, which never counted for much with Wordsworth, from the imagination of others; beauty, for him, is not only 'a living presence of the earth'; the bright deities of Greeks and Elizabethans have their part in it, and Keats revels in airy touches which give us momentary glimpses of them. Is he indignant at the riot of foppery and barbarism? Apollo is indignant too; and to read the meaning of Jove's large eyebrow is no less a part of the poetic vision than to paint the tender green of April meadows. The caressing charm and joyance of manner, as well as the flowing rimed couplets, are still reminiscent only of Hunt, and, at the close, he turns from awed contemplation of the 'long perspective of the realms of poesy' before him to describe, with a full heart, the home of his good friend and mentor, and

> The hearty grasp that sends a pleasant sonnet
> Into the brain ere one can think upon it.

The sonnet was, indeed, at this stage, Keats's most familiar mode of lyric expression. As early as 1814, he had stammered in this form his boyish worship of Byron and Chatterton. The seventeen sonnets published in the 1817 volume are mostly fresh utterances of admiring friendship. Haydon, his future sister-in-law Georgiana ('nymph of the downward smile and sidelong glance'), his brothers, or 'kind Hunt' are addressed or remembered in eminently 'pleasant,' but rarely accomplished, verse. They all follow the severe Petrarchian rime-form used by Wordsworth, and often recall his more meditative sonnets both in phrase and sentiment.

The little volume was discriminatingly reviewed by Hunt, but made no impression. Keats, too acutely sensitive to his own critical judgment to care much for the world's, was already immersed in the great quest of beauty of which he had dreamed in *Sleep and Poetry.*

Endymion, the work of the twelve months from April 1817 to April 1818, has the invertebrate structure, the insecure style, the weakness in narrative and the luxuriance of colour and music, natural to one who still lived more in sensation than in thought; but, also, the enchanted atmosphere and scenery, and the sudden reaches of vision, possible only to one whose senses were irradiated by imagination, and 'half created,' 'half perceived.' 'Poetry must surprise by a fine excess,' was a later dictum of Keats, justified by some of his finest work. At present, he spends his wealth wantonly, careless of the economies and reticences of great art. Yet, there are strokes of magic which no artistry could achieve, and many lines and phrases which help us to understand how, from the effeminate sentiment, was evolved the tender delicacy of *The Eve of St Agnes*, and, from the riot of luxurious fancy, the noble and ordered opulence of the *Autumn* ode. Of such is the wonderful picture of the wave

> Down whose green back the short-liv'd foam, all hoar,
> Bursts gradual, with a wayward indolence.

The story of Endymion and the moon, as retold by the Elizabethans, had early captivated Keats's imagination: the loveliness of the moon-lit world—even in a London suburb—had become a kind of symbol for all beauty, and he himself a new Endymion, the implicit hero of the story he told; and, by the same symbolism, a lover of all loveliness, so that nothing in the universe of real or imagined beauty was irrelevant to his quest. Hence, we pass easily to and fro from this to other legends not otherwise akin—Cybele, Glaucus and Scylla, Arethusa. Neither his grip upon his subject nor his technical mastery yet avail to make these felt otherwise than as digressions. On the other hand, the *Hymn to Pan* (book I), and the roundelay of Bacchus (*O Sorrow*) (book IV), where the dreamy pacing of the verse gathers into lyric concentration and intensity, mark the highest reach of the whole poem.

In the brief, manly preface to *Endymion*—its sufficing comment—Keats told his critics that he recognised in it

> a feverish attempt rather than a deed accomplished.... It is just that this youngster should die away; a sad thought for me, if I had not some hope that while it is dwindling I may be plotting, and fitting myself for verses fit to live.

In particular, he dreamed of trying once more to touch, 'before I bid it farewell,' the 'beautiful mythology of Greece.'

Before *Endymion* was complete, he had planned with his friend Reynolds a volume of tales from Boccaccio. Keats chose the fifth story of the fourth day of *The Decameron*, that of Lisobeta and the pot of basil. It was, no doubt, an advantage for the author of *Endymion* to work upon a story which, with many openings for romantic and visionary imagination, was yet, in substance, close-knit and coherent. Its setting in the business world of an Italian city was less favourable to his art, and, throughout the first half of the tale, Keats is not completely at ease. But the romance owes to him almost all its delicate beauty. Boccaccio's lovers give some pretext to the brothers' violence; Isabel and Lorenzo are the innocent victims of a sordid crime, the memory of which comes back upon the perpetrators like the smoke of Hinnom. But it is after Lorenzo's murder that the poetic transformation of the romance is most complete. The apparition in Boccaccio is a conventional ghost-scene; Keats imagines the shadowy life of the murdered man in his forest-grave, slowly growing one with the earth and strange to mortal things, but quickened anew in the presence of Isabel. The great scene in the forest is told with an impassioned calm like that of Isabel herself, as she presses towards 'the kernel of the grave.' Boccaccio had evaded the ghostlier suggestions of the scene by making the body miraculously intact. Keats does not evade them; but he ennobles what he will not conceal, and compels us to see not the wormy circumstance but 'Love impersonate, cold—dead indeed, but not dethroned.'

Great as is the advance of *Isabella* upon *Endymion*, it must still be reckoned among his immature works, in view of the wonderful creations of the following autumn and spring. The six months which followed were a time of immensely rapid growth, not merely in imaginative power and technical mastery, but in intellectual range and vigour, and in moral grip. The not very precocious boy of eighteen and twenty is on the verge of the truly marvellous manhood of his twenty-fourth year, and the man, as well as the genius, is awake. His letters, after *The Prelude* the most precious document we possess of the growth of a poet's mind, are especially illuminating for the year 1818. 'To enjoy the things that others understand' might have satisfied his aspiration in 1817; in April 1818, he turns away dissatisfied from his own 'exquisite sense of the luxurious,' and feels the need of 'philosophy,' bracing experience and activity for his fellow-men. He will learn Greek and Italian,

> and in other ways prepare myself to ask Hazlitt in about a year's time the best metaphysical road I can take.... I find there is no worthy pursuit but the idea of doing some good in the world.

In July, during a foot-tour with his friend Brown through the Highlands, he writes:

> I should not have consented to these four months' tramping,... but that I thought it would give me more experience, rub off more prejudice, use me to more hardship, identify finer scenes, load me with grander mountains, and strengthen more my reach in poetry than would stopping at home among my books.

The germ of such thoughts can be found, it is true, in much earlier letters, and, as we have seen, in his first poetic profession of faith; for Keats was at no time the weakling suggested by much of his youthful verse. But they are pronounced with new conviction, they mark no fugitive aspiration, but a spiritual deliverance already, in effect, accomplished.

He had, indeed, 'great allies'; Shakespeare and Wordsworth cooperated in deepening and enlarging the scope of his genius; to its richness they could not add. All through 1817, Shakespeare had been a companion; *Endymion* is strewn with his diction; in April 1818 (sonnet *On sitting down to read King Lear once again*), the golden harmonies of romance seemed thin and poor beside the passion and the heights and depths of Shakespearean tragedy. He was already past *Endymion,* and knew it, as his contemporary preface attests. And Wordsworth led him, by other, not less enthralling or less enduring, paths, to the same deeper understanding of sorrow. He was never weary, Brown tells us, of repeating the *Immortality* ode; its sublime portrayal of a mind redeemed by discipline and suffering and 'an eye that hath kept watch o'er man's mortality' perhaps contributed to the doctrine of the world as a 'Vale of Soul-making' through pain and trouble, which he unfolds in his beautiful letter of April 1819 to his brother George.

And Wordsworth helped to draw him nearer to one whose poetry provided a yet sterner discipline for the effeminate elements of his genius. In Milton, he recognised a poet who 'with an exquisite passion for poetic luxury, had yet preferred the ardours to the pleasures of song.' It was under these conditions and in this temper that he prepared to carry out the intention expressed in the preface to *Endymion.* Six months after the completion of *Endymion, Hyperion* was begun. It was a giant step forward, which neither the intimate study of Milton nor his first experience, on the Highland tour, of grand scenery, of mountain glory and gloom, or of the relics of fallen faiths (like the druid cirque at Keswick), makes less wonderful. In the story of *Hyperion,* he found a theme equal in its capacity for epic grandeur to that of *Paradise Lost,* and, with apparent ease, he rose to its demands, as if Milton had merely liberated a native instinct of greatness from the lure of inferior poetic modes. *Endymion* was a tissue of adventures, the romantic history of a soul; in *Hyperion,* we watch a conflict of world-powers, the passing of an old order and the coming of a new, the ruin and triumph of gods. The indecisive dreamy composition gives place to a noble architectonic. Keats was not at all points at a disadvantage in his bold rivalry with Milton. If he could not bring the undefinable weight of experience, of prolonged and passionate participation in great and memorable events, which is impressed on every line of *Paradise Lost,* his austerest restraint is touched with the freshness and *entrain* of young genius. If he has less than Milton's energy, he has more than his magic; if he has less of dramatic passion and movement, he has more of sculpturesque repose. It is here, however, that the doubt arises whether the magnificent torso could have been completed on an epic scale. Milton's theology introduced a conflict of purpose into his epic which is never overcome; but it secured to the vanquished fiends a cause and a triumph; they move us by their heroic resolve as well as by their suffering. Keats's 'theology' was the faith proper to a devotee of the principle of beauty in all things, 'that first in beauty shall be first in might'; but this law, recognised and proclaimed by the defeated Titans themselves, makes any enterprise like Satan's not merely unnecessary to the scheme of things, but in flagrant contradiction with it. The ruined Titans are inferior not only in nobility, but in strength and spirit. The pathos of a hopelessly and finally lost cause broods from the first over the scene; the contrast between the passionate recovery of the still mighty archangel from his fall, and the slow, sad awakening of aged Saturn, is typical. Satan's defiance is more poetic and so, in the deeper sense, more beautiful, than the sad resignation of Adam and Eve; but, in Keats, it is sorrow, not hate, that is 'more beautiful than beauty's self.'

Hyperion, incomplete, perhaps inevitably incomplete, as it is, remains the greatest achievement of Keats in poetry. Yet, its want of root in his intimate experience compels us to class it among the sublime *tours de force*, not among the supreme poems, of the world. And the effort to be Miltonic, even in his own way, finally grew oppressive. If Milton liberated, he also constrained, and Keats, in the later parts of the fragment, is often himself in a way that is un-Miltonic. After the close of 1818, *Hyperion* was only fitfully pursued; in September 1819, he writes that he has definitively given it up. Two months later, however, he had new plans with it. During November and December, he was 'deeply engaged,' records Brown, 'in remodelling the fragment of *Hyperion* into the form of a vision.' Though *The Fall of Hyperion* betrays the impending failure of his powers, it is of surpassing interest as an index to the ways of his mind. There is little doubt that, from Milton, he had passed, during 1819, to a renewed study of Dante (in Cary's translation). In the pregnant symbolism of *The Divine Comedy*, he found a mode of expressing ideas more akin to his own than Milton's austere grandeur. Dante's gradual purification, also, in *Purgatory*, by pain, answered to his own youthful conception (in *Sleep and Poetry*) of a progress, through successive illusions, towards the true state of the poet. And, as Dante has to climb the mountain and pass through the fire before he can receive the vision of Beatrice, so Keats represents himself as passing successively through the indolent romance of the dreamer, the 'garden' and the 'temple,' up to the 'shrine' where the poet, taught, at length, to grapple directly with experience, endures the fiery proof of those

> to whom the miseries of the world
> Are miseries, and will not let them rest.

Only thus may he receive the vision of the meaning of beauty disclosed in the story of Hyperion, now, at length, retold. Moneta, the Beatrice of this vision, is, however, no radiant daughter of heaven, but a 'forlorn divinity,' the 'pale Omega of a wither'd race,' though, also, as the fostress of Apollo, the 'Alpha' of a new. Thus, insistently, did Keats, with symbol and image, press home the thought that beauty, the ideal, can only be won through pain, and that poetry is incomplete if it evade and leave unexpressed 'the agonies, the strife of human hearts. Though *The Fall* does not approach *Hyperion* in sustained splendour, and diverges from it in the passages common to both, mostly for the worse, yet, it contains some lines which he never surpassed; and his attempt to charge the myth with a richer and deeper import, unskilful as it was, justifies the surmise that, had his powers not failed, he might have given to England a poem more nearly comparable than any other with Goethe's *Faust*.

In the meantime, however, a rich harvest of poetry had been gathered in. *The Eve of St Agnes*, begun at Chichester, January 1819, throws some light on the causes which had gradually detached his interest from *Hyperion*. For it betrays an almost conscious revulsion from the austere grandeur, the cosmic scenery and the high prophetic theme of Milton. It is, in the loftiest sense of the words, a young man's poem, pervaded by the glow, the romance, the spiritual and sensuous exaltation of youth. Chatterton and Spenser here take Milton's place with Keats, and both are more nearly of his kin. A few lines of Burton's *Anatomy*, describing the legend, were, probably, the sole nucleus of this magical creation. The romance of Madeline and Porphyro, unlike that of Isabella and Lorenzo, shone out to his imagination against the background of harshly alien forces. But, everything that there made for drama and conflict is here subdued, almost effaced, while everything of purely beautiful and harmonious appeal, whether to soul or sense, is enriched and heightened. The menace of murderous kinsmen is now merely the distant clamour of gross revelry heard fitfully through an opening door. The 'bitter chill' of the winter landscape, the snow and storm without, though drawn with an intensity of imagination hardly matched in winter-painting elsewhere, merely encompass with their aridity and torpor, but cannot invade or impair, the glow and warmth of fragrance and gracious soul-light of Madeline's chamber. Everything here—from the tender glories of the painted window to the delicate cates of the banquet—is imagined with a consummate instinct for beauty which explores and exhausts all the sources of sensuous appeal, yet so transfigures them that nothing merely sensuous is left. The stanza—handled with a mastery equalled, save in *The Faerie Queene*, only in *Adonais*, where it is much less Spenserian—shows, with certain archaisms, that Spenser was in his mind. But, Porphyro and Madeline are of a more breathing and human world than Spenser's; their passion and their purity, the high chivalry, the awed rapture of the scene, are untouched by allegory; and, if Madeline, with the exquisite *naïveté* of her maiden love, has any lineage, it is not to be found in a Britomart or Una, radiant champions and symbols of chastity, but in an Imogen or a Perdita.

What remains of the companion piece, *The Eve of St Mark's*, though conceived at the same time, was written some months later, and it remained unfinished. Once more, a saint's day legend sets astir the devout heart of a young girl. But the pictorial artistry, even more exquisite, is in the subtler, more reticent, manner of *Christabel*. 'It is quite in the spirit of town quietude,' wrote Keats. An old minster, 'on a coolish evening,' echoing footfall, drowsy chimes and Bertha's chamber in the gloaming with the play of her flickering shadow upon screen and panel—subdued effects like these replace the 'bitter cold,' the gules and argent of *St Agnes*. And there are hints of a delicate *grotesquerie* equally foreign to that poem, but, like its delicate finished realism, its miniature description, foreshadowing Rossetti, who regarded it as, together with *La Belle Dame*, 'in manner the choicest and chastest of Keats's work.' The other, not less wonderful, romance of this spring, *La Belle Dame sans Merci* (April 1819), may, also, be called a companion poem of *The Eve of St Agnes*; but the ways of Keats's genius are here seen in a totally different, almost opposite, aspect. The woeful knight at arms, like Madeline, has awakened from a dream; but his awakening is poignant disillusion, not blissful fulfilment; the desolate moor, not the fragrant chamber and the lover's presence. And his weird chant is in subtlest sympathy with his forlornness. Instead of the jewelled richness, the saturated colour of *The Eve of St Agnes*, we have a style of horror-stricken reticence and suggestion, from which colour and definite form have been withdrawn; and a music of brief haunting cadences, not of eloquent, articulated phrase. The character of each poem is accentuated in the final line of its stanza: the Alexandrines of *The Eve of St Agnes* are points of heightened *entrain*, the short slow closing verses of *La Belle Dame* ('And no birds sing'), moments of keener suspense.

Lamia, last of the tales in verse, followed after an interval of some months and under widely different intellectual conditions. The summer of 1819 found Keats adventuring in regions more than ever remote from the dream-world of *Endymion*. Shakespeare draws him to the historic drama; to these months belong his experiments, *Otho the Great* and *Stephen*; a little later came *The Cap and Bells*. And now it was the supple and sinewy narrative, the sensuous splendour, the ringing, metallic rimes of Dryden's verse-tales that attracted his emulation. The story of *Lamia* (June—September) which he found in Burton resembled those of *Isabella* and of *The Eve of St Agnes* in representing two lovers united by a secret and mysterious bond; but, here, the mystery becomes sheer witchcraft. The witch-maiden Lamia, in the hands of the author of *La Belle Dame*, might well have yielded a counterpart of Coleridge's Geraldine. The influence of Dryden's robust and positive genius has almost banished the delicate reticences of the earlier poems. Lamia's transformations have the hard brilliance of mosaics; the 'volcanian yellow' invades her silver mail 'as the lava ravishes the mead.' The same influence told more happily in the brilliant precision of the picture of the city festival, each half-line a distinct and living vignette. There are not wanting—there could not be—touches of descriptive magic, but the charm of Lamia is rather described than felt; whether woman be her true nature (I 118) or her disguise (II 306) (and this is not made clear), she has not the defined character of either; as a psychological portrait, she cannot stand beside Isabel or Madeline. And the cynical tone of restoration gallantry has, here and there, betrayed Keats into lapses of taste elsewhere overcome, as in the terrible line I 330 ('there is not such a *treat* among them all....As a real woman'), and the opening of part II. Keats felt intensely the contrast between the romance of passion and the outer world of cold reflection. In *The Eve of St Agnes*, the flame-like glow of light colour which surrounds the lovers is symbolically contrasted with the frozen world without. In *Lamia*, this symbolism is less telling. But it is helped out by an explicit comment on the climax of the story. The sophist's eye transfixes the serpent-lady, and dissolves the pageant of her love. So, 'cold philosophy' destroys romance. The 'moral' expressed an antagonism dear to Keats's passionately intuitive mind; but its introduction implied just such an obtrusion of reflection upon poetry as it purported to condemn.

It is easy, in tracing the growth of an artist who studied so intently the genius of others, to lay too much stress on his artistic seriousness. His famous counsel to Shelley, too, might suggest that he himself was, above all, a curious and elaborate artificer. Some of his manuscripts, no doubt, support this impression. Yet, Keats was not only extraordinarily spontaneous: he could play lightly with the passing mood. His quick sensitiveness of eye and ear and fancy tempted him along many poetic byways beside the way he deliberately chose. He did not write only in his singing-robes, but delighted to weave pleasant rimes in familiar undress. The brother and sister-in-law in America, and his friend Reynolds, received many such rimed interludes in his letters—lively fountains of verse springing up unbidden in the garden of his prose. Such are the four poems, *Robin Hood*, *Lines on the Mermaid Tavern*, *Fancy* and *The Bards of Passion and of Mirth*, all written in the short couplet of *L'Allegro*, with a delicacy of music of which Milton had helped him to the secret, and a daintiness and playfulness of fancy akin to Beaumont and Fletcher, and other haunters of the Mermaid, bards of 'mirth' even more than of 'passion.'

It is natural to contrast with these light and sparkling improvisations the rich and concentrated style—'loaded with gold in every rift'—and the intricate interwoven harmonies of the majority of the contemporary odes. But, most of these were impromptus, too, born of the same sudden inspiration, and their crowded felicities were not studiously inlaid, but of the vital essence of the speech. A may morning, an autumn afternoon, a nightingale's song in a Hampstead garden, a mood of dreamy relaxation after sleep—from intense, almost momentary, experiences like these sprang poems which, beyond anything else in Keats, touch a universal note. In the earliest of these, the fragmentary *Ode to Maia* (May 1818), the recent singer of *Endymion* breathes yet another lyric prayer to the old divinities of antique Greece, seeking the 'old vigour' of its bards, and, yet more, their noble simplicity, 'content' to make 'great verse' for few hearers. The author of the preface to *Endymion* already possessed that temper; and, if he ever won the pellucid purity of Greek speech, it was in these lines. The other odes belonged to the spring of 1819, save *Autumn*, the latest, written in September. *Psyche*, almost the last of the group, was, he tells his brother George, 'the first and only one with which I have taken even moderate pains.' Yet this, like *Indolence*, falls somewhat short of the flawless art of the rest. In both, he is, at moments, luxuriant and unstrung like his earlier self. Psyche, 'loveliest vision far' of faded Olympus, becomes now, like Maia, a living symbol of the beauty he worships, and he will be the priest of her sanctuary. The Miltonic reminiscences are palpable, and by no means confined to an incidental phrase or image. The passing of the gods of Greece, moving, in spite of himself, to the poet of the *Nativity Ode*, Keats mourned more naïvely than Schiller had done twenty years before; then, by a beautiful, perhaps 'illogical,' transition, lament passes into a rapturous hymn to the deathless Psyche whose living temple was the poet's mind. *Indolence* commemorates a mood, as genuine, indeed, but less nearly allied to the creative springs of Keats's genius. Love and ambition and poetry itself appear as ghostly or masque-like figures on a 'dreamy urn'; for them he builds no sanctuary, but turns away from their lure to the honied joys of sense—the sweetness of 'drowsy noons,' his 'head cool-bedded in the flowery grass.'

In the nearly contemporary *Ode on a Grecian Urn*, the symbolism of the urn-figures became far more vital. From the drowsed intoxication of the senses, he rises to a glorious clear-eyed apprehension of the spiritual eternity which art, with its 'unheard melodies,' affords. The three consummate central stanzas have themselves the impassioned serenity of great sculpture. Only less noble are the daring and splendid imagery of the opening, and the immortal paradox of the close. 'Their lips touched not, but had not bade adieu,' Keats later said of the sleeping lovers in *Psyche*, recalling, perhaps, with the carved figures of the *Grecian Urn*, the wistful joy of *Melancholy*. In both these great odes, however, the words imply a more spiritual and complex passion than the naïve bliss of Psyche and Cupid. They meant a stranger and rarer insight into the springs of both joy and sorrow than was thus conveyed. The worship of beauty is the clue to everything in Keats; and, as he came to feel that an experience into which no sadness enters belongs to an inferior order of beauty, so he found the most soul-searching sorrow 'in the very Temple of Delight.' But the emotional poise is other than in the *Grecian Urn*: there, he contemplates the passing of 'breathing human beauty' from the serene heights of eternal art; here, it fills him with a poignant, yet subtly Epicurean, sadness. *Melancholy* is thus nearer to the mood of *Indolence*, and, like it, suffers from some resurgence of the earlier Keats; but the closing lines are of consummate quality. In the *Ode to a Nightingale*, the work of a morning in his friend Brown's Hampstead garden, the poignant sense of life as it is, 'where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,' and the reaching out to a visionary refuge—the enchanted world created by the bird's song—are present together, but with changing dominance, the mood's ecstatic self-abandonment being shattered, at its very acme, by the knell-like 'forlorn,' which 'tolls' him back to his 'sole self.'

In *Autumn*, finally, written after an interval of some months, the sense that beauty, though not without some glorious compensation, perishes, which, in varying degrees, dominates these three odes, yields to a serene and joyous contemplation of beauty itself. The 'season of mellow fruitfulness' wakens no romantic vision, no romantic longing, like the nightingale's song; it satisfies all senses, but enthralls and intoxicates none; everything breathes contented fulfilment without satiety, and beauty, too, is fulfilled and complete. Shelley, whose yet greater ode was written a few weeks later, gloried in the 'breath of autumn's being'—the wild west wind as the forerunner and 'creator' of spring. Keats feels here no need either of prophecy or of retrospect. If, for a moment, he asks 'Where are the songs of spring?' it is only to reply 'Think not of them, thou hast thy music too.' This is the secret of his strength, if, also, of his limitation—to be able to take the beauty of the present moment so completely into his heart that it seems an eternal possession.

With one exception, the *Autumn* ode is the last great and complete poem of Keats. The last of all, written a year later, is, with Milton's *Methought I saw*, among the most moving of English sonnets. Of the sixty-one sonnets he wrote, more than thirty are later than those in the 1817 volume, already noticed, and nearly all belong to the fifteen months following January 1818. He had written no sonnet during the last eight months of 1817. But his close and eager study of Shakespeare's poems towards the end of that year sent him back with renewed zest to sonnet-writing, and, henceforth, after an interval of hesitation, it was exclusively on the Shakespearean rime-scheme. The sonnet which shows him most decisively under the spell of Shakespeare (*On sitting down to read King Lear once again*, January 1818) still, it is true, follows (save for the final couplet) the Petrarchian form. But, a few days later, he wrote the noble *When I have fears*, with the beautiful repetition of the opening phrase in each quatrain, reminiscent of Shakespearean sonnets, such as *In me thou see'st.* One or two, as the charming *June's sea,* copy the Elizabethan manner too cleverly to be very like Keats, nor are his mind and passion at all fully engaged. But, often, he pours into the Shakespearean mould a phrase and music nobly his own. *To Homer* ('Standing aloof') contains the line 'There is a budding morrow in midnight' which Rossetti pronounced the noblest in English poetry. *To Sleep* is full of the poppied enchantment of the *Nightingale* ode. A new, and tragic, note sounds in *The Day is gone, I cry you mercy*—with one or two exceptions (*Ode to Fanny* and *To*...) the only reflection in his poetry of the long agony of his passion for Fanny Brawne. Finally, after a long interval, came that September day of 1820 when, 'for a moment,' writes Severn, 'he became like his former self,' and wrote his last sonnet and last verse *Bright star!* He still aspires, as in the great odes, towards something steadfast and unchangeable; but now, when he is at the end of his career, and aware that it is the end, the breathing human passion counts more for him than the lone splendour of the star.

Save for this sonnet, the year 1820 was a blank. Even before the seizure of 3 February, his poetic power had declined, though still capable of glorious flashes such as redeem the revised *Hyperion.* With the publication of his last volume, in July, some perception of his real stature at length dawned in the high places of criticism. Jeffrey, in *The Edinburgh,* did not conceal his admiration ; Byron admitted that, in *Hyperion,* the surgeon's apprentice had really 'done something great' ; Shelley, strangely indifferent to the rest of the volume, declared that, if *Hyperion* were not grand poetry, none had been written in his time. Neither Shelley nor Keats completely understood each other ; but the younger poet here fell short, both in critical discernment and in modesty, of the elder; his chief recorded utterance about Shelley, and addressed to him, expresses only the annoyance of a lover of fine phrases at the 'magnanimity' of the idealist which stood in their way. Of the fact that Shelley's mind, with some limitations from which he was exempt, had a far larger reach than his own, he nowhere betrays any perception. To Shelley's cordial overtures of friendship, he had, throughout, responded with reserve; and an invitation now received from him (August 1820), to spend the winter with him in Italy, was declined. Even such companionship could not be faced by a dying man. A month later, Keats set out for Rome in care of the devoted Severn, who, during this last brief, sad phase of the poet's life, takes the place of the no less devoted Brown. There, after a relapse from which he never recovered, he died on 23 February 1821. Four days later, he was buried in the protestant cemetery. In April, the self-effacing epitaph which described him as 'one who had writ in water' was magnificently belied by *Adonais.*

'I am certain of nothing,' Keats once wrote, 'but the holiness of the heart's affections and the Truth of Imagination.' Neither Wordsworth nor Shelley put so trenchantly the faith that was implicit in the poetry of both. Nor would either have asserted with the same daring simplicity that he had 'pursued the principle of Beauty in all things.' Abstractions distinguishable from beauty—nature, liberty, love—and truths with which imagination had little to do, counted for as much, or more, with both; and beauty itself is with neither of them so comprehensive, with neither so near and intimate, as it is with Keats. Shelley's worship is remote and 'intellectual,' at once too abstract and too simple to take in much of the concrete and complex actual world. It was the 'Life of Life,' and his gaze pressed home to it through the shimmering veil of the material beauty by which other men's senses were arrested and detained. It was a harmony, perfectly realised only in a world completely at one with itself. The complexities and conflicts of life, and its resulting pain and sorrow, thus remained, for him, purely evil things, of inferior status, even in poetry. Keats could not compare with Shelley in range of ideas, but neither was he weighted with Shelley's speculative incubus; if his thought was not illuminated by Plato, neither was it distorted by Godwin; if he had not access to the sublimities of Aeschylus, he was steeped in the rich humanity of Shakespeare and Spenser and Browne and Wordsworth. His whole imaginative and emotional life was permeated by his eager and acute sensations; while his senses—it is but the other side of the same fact—were transfigured by imagination and emotion. He projected himself instinctively and eagerly into the nature of other living things, not merely some 'immortal' nightingale whose song set wide the magic casements of romance in his heart, but the mere sparrow picking about the gravel before his window. He was no subtle-souled psychologist like Coleridge, but he rendered emotions with a power and richness in which exquisiteness of feeling and poignancy of sensuous symbolism have equal part. Shelley's explanation of his unlettered mastery of the myths of Greece—'He *was* a Greek'—was more generous than apt; he was nearer akin to the Elizabethans, nearer to Wordsworth, nearer even to Shelley himself; but he recovered more completely than any of them the intense humanising vision of nature of which primeval myth was born. And he won his way from the 'Asiatic' luxury of his first work to a power of striking home by the fewest and most familiar words, as in *La Belle Dame,* which, utterly un-Greek in atmosphere and spirit, has the magical simplicity of some lyrics of the *Anthology.* He did not learn to express beauty so comprehensively as he perceived and understood it; probably, he would never have approached in drama the full compass of the beauty which lies, he knew, in the agonies and strife of life—the beauty of

> the fierce dispute
> Between damnation and impassion'd clay

in *King Lear* or *Macbeth.* But, in the imaginative intensity of single phrases, no English poet has come nearer to Shakespeare or oftener recalls him.

And, in *Hyperion,* he showed himself master, not only of a poetic speech for which no theme was too noble or too great, but of a power of construction by no means to be explained by the great example he had before him. It would be rash to say what in poetry would have been beyond the reach of one who, at twenty-five, compels the comparison with Shakespeare and Milton, and yet, deeply as he came under their spell, was lifted by their genius only into more complete possession of his own.

CHAPTER V

LESSER POETS, 1790—1837

ROGERS, CAMPBELL, MOORE AND OTHERS

IN two wellknown lines of the dedication of *Don Juan*, Byron, pursuing his quarrel with the lake poets, or, rather, with Southey, but grouping the three in a common disparagement, laid it down that

> Scott, Rogers, Campbell, Moore, and Crabbe will try
> 'Gainst you the question with posterity.

It is needless to say that posterity has decided that question, group for group, in a sense opposite to the noble poet's real or apparent anticipation. Southey, indeed, may have been 'knocked out' of the competition, on the one side, in the general opinion, and Scott and Crabbe, on the other, may hold their ground, though with considerably fewer points to their credit than Wordsworth and Coleridge. But something like critical unanimity or, at least, a vast majority of critical votes, would disallow, despite admitted merits, the possibility of Rogers, Campbell and Moore continuing the fight on anything like even terms. Still, the grouping remains; and, as Scott falls out of any possible treatment in such a chapter as this and Crabbe has received his measure already, the remaining poets of Byron's fancy may properly occupy us first, to be followed by a large and, in few cases, quite uninteresting or undistinguished train of poets, sometimes of rare excellence in special lines, but, now for this reason now for that, not classable or, at any rate, not generally classed, among the greater singers. The whole body will represent, in some cases with a little overflow, the time before the appearance of distinctly Victorian poets—the time, for the most part, anterior to that most noteworthy 'Lament for Dead Makers' which Wordsworth, less happily than Dunbar, called *An Extempore Effusion on the Death of James Hogg*, which mentions other and greater writers than the Ettrick shepherd, and which actually marks an important dividing line between the dead and the living poets of the earlier nineteenth century, when a full third of that century had passed.

The 'knock-out' above suggested in Southey's case might or might not really have surprised Byron; for it is clear that it was Southey's principles and personality, rather than his poetry, that annoyed his assailant. But he might have been much more certainly disappointed at the corresponding drop in the public estimation of Rogers. At the present time, it is probably a very exceptional thing to find anyone who, save in a vague traditional way, thinks of the author of *The Pleasures of Memory* as a poet at all; and, even where that tradition survives, it is extremely questionable whether it is often supported by actual reading. At one time, of course, Rogers was quite a popular poet; and it is a task neither difficult nor disagreeable for the literary historian to trace the causes of his popularity. He had, like Campbell, the very great advantage of beginning at a dead season and, again like Campbell, he had the further, but more dangerous, advantage of writing in a style which, while thoroughly acceptable to established and conventional criticism, had certain attractions for the tastes, as yet undeveloped, which were to bring about new things. He kept this up later, with some deliberate heed to younger tastes, in *Italy* and *Jacqueline*, thus shifting, but still retaining, his grasp His wealth left him free to write or not, exactly as he pleased: and, in the famous case of *Italy* itself, to reinforce his work in a manner which appealed to more tastes than the purely literary by splendid presentation with the aid of great pictorial art. If he had a sharp tongue, and, perhaps, not exactly a kind heart, he had a very generous disposition; and he was most powerfully assisted by the undefinable gift, by no means a necessary consequence of his affluence, which enabled a *parvenu* to become something like a master of society. He really had taste of various kinds: he might have been a greater poet if he had had less. And so he hit the bird of public taste on several of its many wings.

But the greater number, if not the whole, of these attractions have now ceased to attract; like the plates of *Italy* itself, they have generally become 'foxed with time. We ask, nowadays, simply, 'Was Rogers a poet?' and, if so, 'What sort of a poet was he?' There cannot, for reasons above glanced at, be many people whose answer to this question would be worth much, unless it is based on a dispassionate re-reading of the documents in the case. Such a re-reading may, to some extent, qualify earlier and more impulsive judgments of the same critic; but it is not likely, whatever power of correcting his impressions that critic may possess, to produce any very material alteration of opinion. For Rogers, very distinctly and unmistakably, comes on one side of the dividing line which marks off sheep from goats in this matter; though, on which side the goats are to be found and on which the sheep will depend entirely on the general and foregone attitude of the investigator of poetry. Rogers's subjects are good; his treatment of them is scholarly, and never offends against the ordinary canons of good taste; his versification is smooth and pleasing on its own limited scale; from some points of view, he might be pronounced an almost faultless writer. But will all this make him a poet? If it will not, we might, perhaps, explain the failure worse than by applying to him that opposition of 'quotidian' and 'stimulant' which his very near contemporary William Taylor of Norwich devised as a criterion; which Carlyle laughed at; which Taylor himself made somewhat ridiculous in application; but which has something to say for itself, and which will not be found quite useless in regard to many, if not most, of the subjects of this chapter.

Rogers is always quotidian. You may read *The Pleasures of Memory* at different times of life (and the more different these periods and the longer the intervals the better). It is not difficult or unpleasant to read; and though, if not at first, certainly a little later, you may feel pretty sure that, if Akenside, on the one hand, and Goldsmith, on the other, had not written, *The Pleasures of Memory* might never have been, this is far from fatal. The question is 'What has it positively to give you?' Here is one of its very best couplets:

> Ethereal Power! who at the noon of night
> Recallst the far-fled spirit of delight.

That is good; 'far-fled spirit of delight' is good. But is it, to borrow once more La Rochefoucauld's injurious comparison, 'delicious'? Is it even satisfying? Could you not very well do without it? Now, the phrases of a real poet, though there are, fortunately, thousands and myriads of them, are always delicious; they are always satisfying; and no one of them will enable you to do without any of the others.

Let us try another text and test. The duke of Wellington (as Rogers himself most frankly records in a note to the poem) had told Rogers, with his usual plainness of speech and absence of *pose*, a striking story, how, when he went to sleep after the great slaughter of Assaye,

> whenever I woke, which I did continually through the night, it struck me that I had lost all my friends: nor could I think otherwise till morning came and, one by one, I saw those that were living.

We know vaguely what mighty use the poets, the real poets, from Shakespeare (one might even say from Chaucer) to Shelley would have made of this. If the comparison with these be thought unfair, we can guess from isolated touches in poems like *Lochiel* and *Lord Ullin's Daughter* what a contemporary, a companion in Byron's group and, as we may say, a 'schoolfellow' like Campbell could have made of it. This is the commonplace and conventional generality which it suggested to Rogers:

> Where many an anxious, many a mournful thought,
> Troubling, perplexing, on his heart and mind
> Preyed, ere to arms the morning trumpet called.

With equal frankness (it would be unkind to call it insensibility), he wrote *Italy* partly in verse partly in prose; and there must have been some, perhaps many, to whom the illiberal but critical thought must have suggested itself 'Why not all in prose?' The somewhat famous story of Ginevra would have lost little; and, perhaps, only one piece, and that the best of all, 'The Campagna of Rome,' might be saved, in almost its own figure, by the lines

> Once again
> We look; and lo! the sea is white with sails
> Innumerable, wafting to the shore
> Treasures untold; the vale, the promontories
> A dream of glory; temples, palaces,
> Called up as by enchantment; aqueducts
> Among the groves and glades, rolling along
> Rivers on many an arch high overhead—
> *And in the centre, like a burning sun*
> *The Imperial City.*

Let us leave Rogers with that line and a half and with only a historical, not a spiteful, reference to *Paradise Regained*; for hardly anywhere else, in short poem or in long, has he come so near the 'poetic moment,' even if he has come near, also, to Milton in more senses than one.

Not thus ungraciously can any critic speak of Campbell; but, anyone who spoke of him with unmixed graciousness would hardly be a critic. To him, the 'moment' just mentioned was no stranger;

they met, and he made almost or quite the best of it, again and again. He has the glorious distinction of being, in three different pieces, nearer than any other poet among many to being a perfect master of the great note of battle-poetry. Of these, one, *Ye Mariners of England*, is, to some extent, an adaptation, though an immense improvement on its original; and *The Battle of the Baltic* has some singular spots on its sun. But *Hohenlinden* is unique; subject and spirit, words and music make an indivisible quaternity and, except in two or three passages of Homer and Aeschylus, there is nothing anywhere that surpasses the last and culminating stanza in poignant simplicity. Perhaps no other poem of Campbell can be named with these three, as a whole, but most of his earlier and shorter poems give flashes of undoubted poetry. There is no space here for a miniature anthology of these blooms; but some of them are universally known, and no one with an eye and ear for poetry can read, without recognising it in them, *Lochiel's Warning*, *Lord Ullin's Daughter* (the central jewel of this, however hackneyed, must be excepted for quotation,

> And in the scowl of Heaven each face
> Grew dark as they were speaking),

the less known, but, in parts, extremely beautiful *Lines on Revisiting a Scene in Argyllshire*, *The Soldier's Dream*, *The Last Man* and others. All these are of a tragic and, if not romantic, romantesque cast; but Campbell has retained not a little of the eighteenth century epigram in such lines as the other stock quotation

> The torrent's smoothness ere it dash below.

He had a bluff felicity, as in *The Song of Hybrias the Cretan*, which is not too common at any time; and, in other songs, such as *Withdraw not yet those lips and fingers*, or *How delicious is the winning*, there are strange reminiscences of that seventeenth century feeling to which he sometimes did justice in his critical *Specimens* and which greater singers have not been able to command in their actual verse.

So far so good; but, unfortunately, no historical account of Campbell's poetry can be arrested at this point. He did not write much verse in his fairly long life; not because he was prevented by untoward circumstances (for, though he had some hackwork to do, it was never oppressive or prohibitory), but, apparently, because he did not feel inclined to write much. Still, at a rough guess, he wrote some six or seven thousand lines in all, and it is certain that the poems referred to above, even taking the bad or indifferent (which, in some, is the much larger) part with the good, do not amount to anything like six or seven hundred. The long, or comparatively long, *Pleasures of Hope*, which at once made his fame and his fortune, is much better (though Byron did not think so) than its companion and predecessor *Memory*, for, as has been said, Campbell was a poet and Rogers, save by chance-medley, was not. But, with less flatness, it has nearly as much artificiality; it scarcely ever gets beyond metred rhetoric; and this rhetoric itself, as in the tag

> And Freedom shrieked when Kosciusko fell,

is not always firstrate. Freedom, whether she sits crowned upon the heights or, for the time, dies fighting on the field, has something else to do than to shriek. Of the other long poems, *Gertrude of Wyoming*, perhaps, is the clumsiest caricature of the Spenserian stanza ever achieved by a man of real poetic power; the comparison with Thomson which has sometimes been made of it is an insult to *The Castle of Indolence*; and it is even far below Beattie. As for *Theodric* and *The Pilgrim of Glencoe*, they have, from the first, been carefully 'confessed and avoided' by Campbell's warmest admirers when these had any taste at all. But, it may be said, this long-poem practice was not his vein. The accidents of time and other things had, in the dead season of 1799, made *The Pleasures of Hope* a success, and he had to try to repeat it.

But he did not by any means confine himself to these long poems; and it will have been noticed that, even in reference to the shorter ones and the best of them, it was necessary to speak in all but one instance with reservations. In his *Specimens*, Campbell showed himself, though rather a limited, not a bad, critic, and, though his dislike[1] to the prevailing romantic school (which yet he followed in a sidelong and recalcitrant manner) made him take a questionable part in the Bowles-Pope controversy, he was not contemptible there. But, of self-criticism—at least of such self-criticism as prevents a man from publishing inferior work—he seems to have had little or nothing. It would be dangerous to take his asserted confession, at one moment, that *The Pleasures of Hope* was 'trash,' as a serious utterance; besides, it is not exactly that. Yet, he could deliberately publish, as a version of a chorus in *Medea*, the following lines:

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[1] It has been urged that, in 1842, he acknowledged the greatness of Wordsworth. ''Tis somewhat late,' as the voice said in *Christmas Eve and Easter Day*, but, no doubt, better than never.

> Hallowed Earth! with indignation
>   Mark! oh mark! the murderous deed—
> Radiant eye of wide creation
>   Watch the accursed infanticide[*ceed*].
> . . . .
> In the vales of placid gladness
>   Let no rueful maniac range;
> Chase afar the fiend of madness,
>   Wrench the dagger from Revenge[*vange*].

Which looks like an attempt to match Pope's *Song by a Person of Quality* in the serious blood-and-thunder vein. Nor, if he is seldom quite so bad as this, does he avoid, in a very large number of cases, coming only too near to it.

Cases of 'the poet dying young' (all Campbell's best work was done when he was a little past thirty) and the man surviving are, of course, common enough; and, in most of them, there is little or no need to seek for a special and philosophical explanation. In Campbell's, we may, perhaps, find a particular one beyond the undoubted and obvious fact that the springs of his Helicon were neither frequent nor full; and that it required a special stamp of one breed of Pegasus to set them flowing. He probably suffered not a little from being, in a rather peculiar manner, recalcitrant to his time. He was younger than Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott and Southey, and, though he did not live to be a very old man, Tennyson's *Poems* of 1842 and Browning's *Bells and Pomegranates*, 1841, were published before his death. But he withstood the romantic grace, and yet he could not thoroughly rest and be content with the older classical dispensation. It has been said that Collins would probably have benefited unequivocally by the chance of writing at the time when Campbell actually did write. It is not too great a compliment to the author of *Hohenlinden* to say that there are not a few touches in him which remind us of Collins. But, if he did not exactly, in the language of his own country, '*sin* the mercies' that Collins did not receive, he made little use of them. And so he remains an interesting example, both in himself and to literary history, of the dangers of a transition period.

It can hardly be said that either Rogers or Campbell is a difficult poet to criticise, for, though estimates of both may differ considerably, the difference, as hinted already, will depend almost entirely on the general attitude of the particular critic towards poetry

—a thing which can be allowed for, and compensated, with almost mathematical accuracy. No such process seems to be available in the case of the third remaining member of Byron's selected group[1], Moore. It is almost unnecessary to say that he was extraordinarily popular in his own time; and this popularity had the most solid results, running hard, in all material ways, that of Scott and Byron. Not only did he receive three thousand pounds for the copyright of *Lalla Rookh*, but the actual sale of the much shorter and vastly inferior *Loves of the Angels* brought him in one thousand in the first few months. Although not a few of the *Irish Melodies* are masterpieces in their own kind, it would be interesting to know if any other poet ever received, as Moore is said to have done, during a great number of years, 'a hundred guineas apiece' or their equivalent at the time, for each of more than a hundred and thirty short songs[2]. The *Paradise Lost* comparison, misleading as it may be, certainly does come rather pat here. But the rebate of posthumous criticism on this prodigal reward has been heavy. For something like half a century it has been rare to find an estimate of Moore which, if not positively contemptuous, has not been at least apologetic. He is, perhaps, the best example existing to prove that, in literature, an accumulation of venial sins is much more dangerous than the commission of one capital sin or even more; and that, to any but exceptionally critical judgments to that manner happily born, and in that manner carefully bred, such an accumulation will not be compensated by an accompanying accumulation of non-capital merits.

And yet, Moore's sins are but slight; in no case more than defects, and, in some cases, capable of being vindicated from the charge of being sins at all; while his merits are extremely numerous and, in some cases, of a kind the reverse of vulgar. It is not true that he was, in any bad sense, a toadeater, though, in certain ways, like Kingsley's John Brimblecombe, he might appear to have 'a gnathonical or parasitic spirit.' He had, indeed, a catlike disposition to curl himself up near something or somebody comfortable;

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[1] We have—a trivial but not quite irrelevant fact—one record in Moore's own pleasant words (*Poems*, 1-vol. edn, p. 432 and note) of a meeting of all this group except Scott, with no one else present, at dinner in Campbell's house at Sydenham. Into further biographical details, save those glanced at in the text, it is not necessary to enter in the case of any of the three. All lived literary lives of the ordinary kind, varied, in Rogers's case, with a little business; in his, and in Moore's, with a great deal of society; and in all with a certain amount of foreign travel. Campbell's domestic life was rather exceptionally unhappy, by no one's fault; Moore's was very happy.

[2] Even if there is a mistake here, and the payment was 'a hundred guineas a *part*,' of which there were ten and a supplement, it would have been handsome.

and it is amusing to find that, even in Paris, he was wretched till he managed to find a new Mayfield or Sloperton, not at Lord Moira's or Lord Lansdowne's door, but in 'a cottage belonging to our kind Spanish friends the V...... ls, and a few steps from their house.' But it does not appear that Moore was any more inclined to put up with insulting treatment than the cat itself is. Nobody ever doubted his courage, though the Jeffrey duel may have had a touch of the ludicrous; his conduct in the difficulties brought upon him by the fraud and flight of his deputy at Bermuda presents a memorable contrast, refreshing on his side if saddening on the other, to the conduct of Theodore Hook in almost precisely similar circumstances; and, even with that rather difficult person Byron, he seems to have maintained perfectly independent relations. For some time past, indeed, there has been a tendency to affect disgust at his destruction of Byron's *Memoirs*. One would like to be quite sure, considering the symptoms of public taste at all times and certainly not least of late, whether resentment at the loss of something supposed to be piquant and naughty has not more to do with this than virtuous indignation at an imputed breach of trust. At any rate, it is nearly certain that, putting certain famous *cruces* aside, the *Memoirs* were much more likely to show Byron's bad side than his good one; that they were left to Moore in absolute property; and that their publication would have brought him in far more money than the *Life*, good as it was and handsomely as it was remunerated.

But someone may say 'Never mind his character or his life. He shall be a not dishonourable little fellow if you like. But there is a foible, if not a taint, all over his literature. He is almost always trivial; and, even when he is not that, he is never intense. He never reaches passion, but only sentiment; and that sentiment is too often mawkish if not even rancid. He is almost purely imitative—at least in poems of any pretension. He is a clever craftsman, but never a real artist. He plays with patriotism, with politics, with everything. His "prettiness" is only a mincing artificial variety; and his "favour" was a thing of mere fashion, not long out of date.' That, one believes, is a pretty fair summary of the unfavourable, which seems to have become also the general, attitude to Moore; for nobody pays much attention now to the schoolboy 'improprieties' of the 'Little' poems, which were never very shocking, and of which, indeed, the poems have been purged in all their legitimate editions for more than a century. And, certainly, no person of sense will regard Moore as a serious 'traitor.' Indeed, it is a clause in the more savage indictments that his nationalism was wholly insincere. The more moderate charge suggested above can, perhaps, be best traversed by a counter statement a little more in detail[1].

There can be little doubt that Moore has suffered in more ways than one from the extreme voluminousness of his writings. The standard one-volume edition of his *Poems*, subtracting *The Epicurean* (an exceedingly good piece of ornate prose), contains nearly seven hundred double columned pages, which frequently themselves contain from eighty to a hundred lines apiece. The table of contents fills nearly twenty columns, with sometimes sixty entries in each—the individual poems running from a distich to a series of some thousands of lines. It does not suit the habits of the present day to read all this; still less, to take the slight trouble necessary to understand it; for much of it is 'occasional' and requires commentary. And yet, it may be said unhesitatingly that, unless the whole of it is read, or, at least, what seems to the present writer an impossibly exhaustive selection of all its departments, Moore will not be properly known.

For one remarkable point about him will otherwise escape notice; and that is the curiously pervading and adequate character of such goodness as he possesses. Moore may not meet the lofty demands of lovers of 'high seriousness,' but he is never bad except in his few and short serious satires, *Corruption*, *Intolerance*, etc., where he was trying something—and a very difficult thing—for which he was not in the least fitted; and in the rant of the 'Phelim Connor' letters in *The Fudge Family*, which may itself have been intended as satire of the kind which he could manage. He may not soar very high, he may not dive very deep; but he skims the surface with a curiously light, deft and variously fluttering wing. Trivial he may be; mediocre, in a certain sense, he may be; but one remembers the just protest of even the severe Boileau in another case—*Il n'est pas médiocrement gai*; and some would add and maintain pretty stoutly that, now and then, *Il n'est pas médiocrement tendre*.

One thing no competent and fairminded enemy has ever denied him—an almost unique faculty of marrying words to music and music to words. Part of this skill, it may be said, has little or nothing to do with poetical merit, but another part of it has; and Moore has rarely received sufficient credit for the remarkable skill with which he effects strictly prosodic variations. But the still more purely poetical value, excluding even prosodic considerations, of the best of his songs in *Irish Melodies*, in *National Airs* and in half a dozen other collections has been strangely belittled by some good judges. Grant that to transfer Ben Jonson's scorn from prose to verse, some of the most popular, such as *The Minstrel Boy* and *The Last Rose of Summer*, and a good many others are somewhat 'flashy things,' only prejudice or that lack of freshness of taste which transfers its own faults to the things distasted, or sheer insensibility, can deny a true, if not the rarest or finest, poetic touch to *Oft in the stilly night* (however little fond one may be of forms like 'stilly'), *At the mid hour of night when stars are weeping* (a wonderful rhythm), *I saw from the beach* and others yet which might be named almost by dozens. The notes to *Lalla Rookh* (which nobody need read) are said to bore a generation which thinks it knows everything already; and the verse-tale of this particular kind is wholly out of fashion. Yet, there are some who, after knowing the poem almost by heart in youth and reading it at different times later, have still found 'The Veiled Prophet' a much more interesting person to read about than some others of their youthful acquaintances; while, in the way of light, sweet, *meringue*-like verse, 'Paradise and the Peri' is still not easily to be beaten.

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[1] To bring 'compurgators' for Moore at any length here would be superfluous. But Hazlitt's praise, though it has been discounted as due to political partisanship, must not be neglected. And those who think it sufficient to dismiss Moore with the stock ticket of 'tawdry' should, perhaps, be informed that Hartley Coleridge, a very considerable critic and a man than whom it is hardly possible to imagine anyone more unlike Moore in blood, temper, literary tastes and almost everything else, quite seriously called the Irish poet's Pegasus 'a milk-white palfrey with rainbow wings.'

Moreover, even Moore's lightest verse can only be neglected at no small loss. Our fathers well knew *The Fudge Family* in their French and English experiences, and *The Two-Penny Post Bag* and the cloud of minor satiric trifles; and scores of delectable tags which enliven other peoples' work were borrowed from them. The felicitous impertinence, neither ill-natured nor ill-bred, which Moore had at command is, perhaps, nowhere better shown than in the famous or should-be famous suggestion as to *Rokeby* (put quite properly in a publisher's mouth) that Scott

> Having quitted the Borders to seek new renown
> Is coming by long quarto stages to town,
> And beginning with *Rokeby* (the job's sure to pay)
> Means to do all the gentlemen's seats by the way.

But there are a thousand examples of it nearly or quite as good, and it attaches itself to matters political, social, ecclesiastical and miscellaneous in a way that ought to amuse, and could not seriously annoy, anyone who has not a rather regrettable proportion of the dunce or of the prig or of both in his composition. This mediocrity, really not ungolden and not of the kind that the Latin sentence blasts, is the note of all Moore's verse—sentimental or jocular. If it offends exclusive lovers of the sublime, they must be offended; but there is a fortunate possibility of being able to appreciate Shakespeare or Shelley, Milton or Keats, at the greatest perfection of any or all, and yet to find a pastime of pleasure, now and then, in Moore's abundant store of sentiment that, if sometimes more or less superficial, is never wholly insincere, and in his satire which, if never lethal, is always piquant.

The three poets just discussed, while, in at least two cases, they deserve their place at the head of this chapter by a certain comparative 'majority' in real worth, and in all three by prescription, have, also, an independent historical right to it. They all (it was the reason of Byron's selection of them for his battle-royal of poets) affected, in different ways, the older or classical school. We may now turn from them to a larger and younger group who, partly, no doubt, because of their being younger, belong decidedly to the other school or division. They represent the generation born between the birth-years of Keats and Tennyson; and it has sometimes been proposed to make of them a definite batch or squad of intermediates between the first and definitely Georgian romantic group from Wordsworth to Keats himself and the definitely Victorian poetry (harbingered before strictly Victorian times, but carried out in them) by Tennyson, the Brownings and their followers. There is, perhaps, some better excuse for this than a mere rage for classification. To exercised critical judgments, a certain transitional character does certainly pervade all or most of this company. They were not in a position, as Tennyson and Browning were if they chose, to imbibe the influence of all their great elders just mentioned, before they themselves wrote, or at least published, anything. The strong places of pedagogy and of criticism were still, in their youthful time, largely, if not universally, occupied by what their own French contemporaries disrespectfully called *perruques*. If there had been any man of absolutely firstrate genius among them, this state of things might not merely have provoked revolt—which it did—but have brought about the complete victories afterwards achieved by their own juniors. But they all belonged to the new crusade, and, if none of them quite reached Jerusalem, they did notable things somewhere about Antioch.

We may list them alphabetically as follows: Beddoes, Hartley Coleridge, Darley, Hood, Richard Henry (fantastically Hengist) Horne, Praed, Sir Henry Taylor, Thomas Wade, C. J. Wells and Charles Whitehead. Their births date from that of Darley, in the same year with that of Keats, to Wade's, ten years later, and group themselves symmetrically in a single decade, on either side of the parting of the centuries. They have all felt strongly the literary influences which helped to determine the work of the greater group before them—the recovery of older (especially Elizabethan) English literature; the discovery of foreign; the subtle revival of imagination that is not confined to 'ideas furnished by the senses'; the extension of interest in natural objects and the like. If whatever influence may be assigned to the French revolution and the great war is less immediate with them, it has, in their case, the strength of retrospect and the fresh impetus of the unsettled state of politics, society and thought, which the revolution and the war left behind them. But there is still about them a great deal that is undigested and incomplete; and no one of them has a genius, or even a temperament, strong enough to wrest and wrench him out of the transition stage.

Nearly the eldest, the most famous by birth and promise, but, in a way, the most unfortunate, was Hartley Coleridge[1]. There is neither space nor necessity here to tell over again the pitiful story of the promise of his youth, recorded not merely by his father but by men so little given to mere sentimentalism as Southey and Wordsworth, and of the lamentable failure of his manhood. It is permissible to think that he was harshly and rather irrationally treated at Oriel. If a probationer fellow disqualifies himself by drunkenness, he does not deserve a solatium of £300, and, if he deserves a solatium of £300, his fault can scarcely have been one of a hopelessly disqualifying nature. But, however great may have been the shock of disappointment at this disgrace, and at the loss of the life of studious ease for which alone he was fitted, it cannot have caused, though it may have determined and rendered incurable, that fatal paralysis of will which he inherited from his father in an aggravated form. This not merely hampered him in schoolmastering—that is not surprising—but stunted and made abortive the poetical and critical genius which he certainly possessed. He did attain, by good luck, by kindness of friends and by his own indifference to elaborate comfort, a life, if not of studious ease, at least of almost entire, or very slightly taxed, leisure, with considerable facility for poetic and other composition. On the margins of books and even newspapers, as well as in a few finished and published papers, he showed that he possessed a critical faculty not much short, on individual points, of his father's or of Hazlitt's; and he also wrote verse. But a fanciful eugenist might have argued that Hartley only inherited that portion of poetical spirit which his father had shown before the child's own birth. The greater part of Hartley's poems certainly makes one think rather of the Coleridge before 1797 than of the poet of *The Ancient Mariner* and *Kubla Khan* and *Christabel.* He knew his limits ('I am one of the small poets'), though the beautiful and touching piece *Poietes Apoietes*—

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[1] Anyone who wishes to appreciate Hartley should look at the generally neglected fragment of his *Prometheus*, which, it is important to remember, preceded Shelley's masterpiece. S. T. C.'s adverse criticism (he was rather a Roman father in that respect, if not in others) and, perhaps, the Oriel calamity arrested the composition. It must have been, no doubt, in any case, a much lesser thing than Shelley's; but it would have been not damagingly different, and it might have been good.

> No hope have I to live a deathless name—

half contradicts its own assertion: and to it may be added the fine sonnet to Shakespeare (which, with Matthew Arnold's companion poem in verse and Dryden's short description in prose, may be ranked for combined adequacy and brevity, on a thousand times' attempted subject), the striking pair on *Youth, A Medley,* the most Shakespearean of Shakespearean imitations,

> When I review the course that I have run;

the *Homer*, almost as good as the *Shakespeare*, the sonnet on the extraordinarily difficult subject *Prayer* and one or two others. The 'sonnet's narrow ground' just suited Hartley; for, though the far-brought fancies of his youth did not wholly desert his age, they found no power in him to carry them further still, or shape them into abiding and substantial form. Nor is it too charitable, too fanciful, or too obvious, to assign part, at least, of his failure to his time—a time with the old assisting convictions or conventions broken down and the new not firmly set.

Thomas Hood and Winthrop Mackworth Praed, though moving in very different spheres and, so far as one knows, strangers to one another in life, are indissolubly associated in literature, owing to the singular 'double arrangement' of their combination of serious and comic work, and of the character of at least the comic work of both. This latter, in its more special aspect, may be postponed for a little, so that we may group it further in a way not unimportant or uninteresting to the historical student of literature. It is sufficient here to dismiss as unprofitable and unnecessary the question whether, in any case, serious or comic, there was a debt owing on either side to the other. Mere partisans have sometimes excited themselves over this question[1], but it is of no real importance. Although they pair off in so remarkable a manner, each, to eyes of any critical discernment, has a perfectly sufficient idiosyncrasy. It was long the case, and it may be doubted whether it has entirely ceased to be so, that the fame of Hood's serious work was largely, if not completely, obscured by that of his comic, with the exception of the two great popular-sentimental favourites *The Song of the Shirt* and *The Bridge of Sighs.* It is well known that Thackeray, in one of those impulsive outbursts which have been often misinterpreted, expressed himself as rather indignant at Hood's comic avocation from his real business. No man's memory and reputation have been more cruelly overloaded and overwhelmed by the publication of heaps of what is only not sheer rubbish because it served once to win bread for a true poet and an admirable man of letters, and because there is nothing in it in the least disgraceful. But, apart even from the very best of the comic work, which is to be noticed later, apart from the 'sensational pieces' *The Song* and *The Bridge,* which make their appeal at once to all those who are likely to appreciate them, Hood has to his credit a body of purely serious poetical work neither aiming at mere popularity, nor deliberately eschewing it, work to be taken at a purely poetic valuation and judged on that, which (even though fifteen editions of it sold in as many years after his death) is still far too often neglected, and, even when not quite neglected, is far too seldom accorded its proper rank.

It was, perhaps, in the circumstances, a minor misfortune—similar to the major one of the huge unsifted dust-heap of the *Works*—that there were included in the collection of his *Serious Poems,* made just after his death, even such in themselves excellent things as *Miss Kilmansegg* and the *Clapham Academy* ode. For public taste was, is and probably always will be, not merely a 'great-sized monster of ingratitudes' but one of haste, indiscrimination and other bad things. It had been accustomed to consider Hood a mere joke-smith; and it was sure to fix on these and one or two others as instances of his real vocation. All this serio-comic or tragi-comic stuff were much better segregated, and the removal would leave nearly three quarters of a volume of some four hundred pages full of poetry pure and simple. Nothing in this is rubbish; some of it is extraordinarily good. *The Haunted House* is one of the minor, and not so very minor, marvels of English poetry. The only objection that one can imagine as being brought against it, by anyone who can appreciate it at all, is that the craftsmanship is almost too unconcealedly and obtrusively perfect[1]—the accumulation of the unusual, stately, mournful rhythm of the stanza; the carefully constructed and diffused detail and the atmosphere of decay, destruction and dread; the as careful selection of language tending to the same object but never diverging into extravagance or the disgusting; above all, the triumphant avoidance of that slip into the ludicrous which these horror-plays and poems constantly commit. *The Elm Tree* is nearly as good, though, perhaps, it might have been shortened. The more popular *Eugene Aram* and *The Bridge of Sighs* itself are not flawless, but the grimness of the one and the pathos of the other could have been attained by none save a true poet. *The Plea of the Midsummer Fairies* may be thought to need no praise after Lamb's; yet, it may not be impertinent, and it is certainly not rash, to pronounce it, after nearly a hundred years, the most charming poem of some size and pretension which has missed its due meed of general appreciation during the interval. It was rather unwise to try *Hero and Leander* again; and the anapaestic metre of *Lycus the Centaur* was ill chosen—the gallop of the centaur probably suggested it. Yet, if anyone will read these two poems patiently he will hardly think otherwise than nobly of them.

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[1] It turns very mainly on the other question of priority in the use of what has been called 'antithetical punning.' This, even as regards the bare chronology of the writings of the two, is doubtful; and every one ought to know that there are much older examples, which each might have taken as pattern, independently, if either wanted any pattern at all.

But Hood was by no means only a master of the heavier plectrum. He could write songs and shorter pieces generally, light, but not in the least comic, with singular skill. Some of these, no doubt, have been confounded, with Moore's and others, under the general censure-tickets 'tinkling,' 'trivial,' 'tawdry,' 'sentimental' and what not. Anyone who chooses may, of course, pin one or another, or several, of these epithets to *A Death Bed*, and even to the great *Farewell, Life* stanzas written on his own death-bed; to the ballad (*It was*

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[1] Wordsworth, it may be remembered, made no very different objection from this to *The Ancient Mariner* itself.

not in the Winter) of the time of roses; to *Fair Ines* and *A lake and a Fairy boat* and the bitter-sweet irony of *Spring it is cheery* and the stateliness and fervour of *Giver of glowing light* and *The stars are with the Voyager.* But a more catholic criticism will simply disregard tickets or, perhaps, detach them and throw them on the rubbish heap, their appointed place, saying, 'These things are poetry: and this was a poet.'

Merely as a serious poet, Praed holds a far lower place than Hood; in fact, with one doubtful exception, to be noticed presently, he has nothing at all to compare with *The Haunted House* or *The Plea of the Midsummer Fairies,* and not much to show with the shorter poems. *Arminius* escapes the bad side of mediocrity in one way and *Josephine* in another; but the best and, perhaps, the only distinguished thing Praed has done in this kind is the strange and beautiful *Time's Song,*

> O'er the level plains, where mountains meet me as I go,

unusual and effective alike in rhythm, in the phrase adroitly broken to suit the rhythmical movement, and in the economy of construction, detail and explanation, leading up to a kind of 'the rest is silence.' But he never repeated this in a short poem, or expanded the method in a longer. The fact is that the ironic and humourous impulse, partly, no doubt, determined by Byronic influence at first, but diverging into ways not in the least like Byron's, was generally omnipresent and omnipotent with him, and almost invariably deflected his treatment into the sort of mixed mode which Southey had started in things like *The Old Woman of Berkeley,* and which Barham, a much older man than Praed, was to practise with signal success a little later. Not a few both of the *Tales* and of other pieces, from the schoolboy *Gog* onwards, have this hybrid character. But it produced at least one thing which is a masterpiece of its kind and which contrasts again most curiously with Hood's tragi-comedy. In this latter, *The Desert Born, Miss Kilmansegg* herself and the rest, the comic (even where there is positively tragic matter) always has the upper hand and, sometimes, burlesques the tragic itself. *The Red Fisherman* has, of course, a comic side or, rather, one may say, a comic outside or jacket to it; and it is full of excursions in themselves comical. But these are used almost in the manner in which Shakespeare uses similar devices, sometimes to set off that seriousness which, no doubt, is greater in him than in Praed. With Hood, the 'finish,' as wine-tasters say, the flavour that is left in the mouth, is always comic unless he is wholly serious. The reader of *The Red Fisherman*, if he be a fit reader, laughs as he passes at

> The water was as dark and rank
> As ever a Company pumped,

and at the corporation banquet and the political jibes. But what he carries away with him, like the fisherman's hook in the actual case, is the description of the pool, and the terrible angler, and the death-gasps of the knight and 'the eyes of Mistress Shore.' Even the battle of hook and crook which just saves the abbot, though it is humorous, is not ludicrous; and these passionate touches, with the whole effect they produce, taken with *Time's Song*, help the more purely comic verse, which we shall notice later, to show what a poet of the higher kind Praed might have been in addition to the lighter and gayer singer that he was.

Henry (afterwards Sir Henry) Taylor offers one of the interesting poetic idiosyncrasies which are pretty strongly marked off from others, but which, somehow, fail to mark for themselves, and in the circle of their own performances, a definite and enduring achievement. That his main work was dramatic may partly, but will not wholly, account for this. That the enormous influence of the Elizabethan drama on the romantic revival should provoke direct imitation of itself was almost a matter of course; and it belongs to other divisions of this work to tell how all the poets—from Wordsworth, the most undramatic of all great writers, to Scott, the most dramatic of all men who have written bad dramas—tried it and how almost all, except Shelley, who might have been thought least likely to succeed, failed. But, with all of them, drama, fortunately, was a bywork. With Taylor (for even his remarkable lyrical faculty was essentially germane to the Elizabethan school of drama), the dramatic form was all-pervading and all-powerful. People have forgotten most things of his save *Philip van Artevelde*, which, to most, is now itself not much more than a name; but *Edwin the Fair* and *St Clement's Eve* (if not, also, *Isaac Comnenus*) ought to be read, and will hardly be read once only by those who can taste them at all. Still, *Philip van Artevelde*, no doubt, is his diploma-piece and not merely that. It failed on the stage; though, if the apparently growing taste for psychological plays were some day to unite itself with a taste for literature, the case might be altered. But, for a time, it had great vogue with readers of worth; and Taylor, perhaps, may be thought to have been the most unfortunate of all these 'intermediates' in being pushed from his stool, almost before he was fairly settled on it, by Tennyson, who used quite different forms and methods, and by Browning, who partly used the same, but added many others and wielded them with much greater power. As a dramatic poem, *Philip van Artevelde* stands very high. It is entirely free from the iciness which, being mistaken for something Greek (Greek tragedy cold!), at first attracted people in the almost exactly (though much more shortlived) contemporary *Ion* of Thomas, afterwards Sir Thomas, Noon Talfourd. The part of Elena is, perhaps, nearer than that of any heroine in any modern English play (putting Shelley's Beatrice aside) to something great; and there are in it, as also in the other plays, almost innumerable passages of real poetic thought expressed in really poetic words. But Taylor had the fault—common to both Wordsworth and Southey, of whom he was a kind of disciple—of want of concentration in writing; he lacked action and narrative power; and it was seldom that he either would or could give vent to his lyric gift. The present writer has never seen an adequate selection from Taylor, though one may exist. It would be as scrappy as *England's Parnassus* itself; but it would certainly show the author's right to a place on the sacred hill.

Some of Taylor's few but remarkable lyrics give evidence of a sort of underground vein which was rarely tapped (and which may be sought in vain in Talfourd). Such are the famous, or should-be famous, 'Quoth tongue of neither maid nor wife,' in *Philip van Artevelde* and the song of Thorbiorga in *Edwin the Fair* and divers passages in the scanty, and now, perhaps, rarely read, *Minor Poems*. They connect him with the rest of the group mentioned above, and with one or two others who are all, or almost all, more definitely lyrical in main substance, and who strangely anticipate not merely Tennyson and Browning, but, even still more, the spasmodics, the pre-Raphaelites and other poets such as the late John Davidson, who have touched the present day. These are the men who, while feeling strongly the 'antecedent' influences, as they may be termed—Elizabethan, German and miscellaneous—though not, as yet, much touched by the purely medieval, derive more directly from Coleridge, Shelley and Keats, especially from the first two; men who showed already, though in a crude and half embryonic form, the strong tendency of the nineteenth century towards occasional and, therefore, lyrical verse; and who, while underlying all the objections (*quantum valeant*) of Wordsworth to *The Ancient Mariner*, possess something of the merits which even Wordsworth allowed to that exceptionable work of his yokefellow.

Of these, the eldest was George Darley, who, as mentioned above, anticipated the others by nearly a decade. Darley is a poet ill to recommend to any but those who, either by nature or by study or by both, are initiate in at least the outer mysteries of poetry; and even some adepts cannot stomach his most ambitious work, the plays *Becket* and *Ethelstan*. Some physical and some mental disabilities seem to have combined to alloy and hamper his idiosyncrasy. He was an incurable stammerer, and could not, like Lamb, turn this blemish to his own or other people's favour. He was 'a great arithmetician' and, though the one kind of 'numbers' certainly does not interfere with the enjoyment of the other, Mathesis, except under the mantle of Urania, has not fostered many poets. Lastly, he was a considerable, and a rather harsh, critic after the ugly 'strip-and-whip' fashion of his time; and, though some may say that it would have been better if he had criticised his own work more, there seems to have been a conflict in him of the poetical and critical natures. Even his lyrical gift, acknowledged by the best judges among his contemporaries and successors to be extraordinary and constantly shown in *The Errors of Ecstacie*, in the verse scattered about the prose *Labours of Idleness* and elsewhere, in the pastoral drama *Sylvia* and in the wonderful outburst of his masterpiece *Nepenthe*, too seldom takes the clear, pure, finished form which, sooner or later, assures a permanent place. It is often, and in *Nepenthe* most of all, unintelligible to those who demand a definite and fairly obvious meaning translatably expressed; it sometimes (the crowning instance is the loathsome rubbish, for one fears no softer phrase will do, of the Dwerga part in *Becket*, on which the author obstinately prided himself) shows gross lapses of taste; it has, more frequently still, ill-blended sentiment and grotesque; and, sometimes, it suffers from that rather fatal fluency which seems especially to beset Irish poets. But, ever and anon, come splendid bursts. Those who can dive in poetic whirlpools will find the gold cups oftenest in *Nepenthe* itself and, sometimes, in *The Errors of Ecstacie*, which, while it came long before Bailey's *Festus* and longer before Dobell's *Balder* and Alexander Smith's *Life Drama*, contains something of the essence of all three in five and thirty merciful pages. Those, on the other hand, who want poetic sweetmeats all ready for consumption in a separate and at once accessible form, have only to turn the pages of *Sylvia,* where the lyrics obligingly stand out, or to go straight to the minor poems. The once immensely popular *I've been roaming* may strike most people now as only a sample of the 'Mooreish melody'; and, though pretty, is not supremely so. But the equally wellknown *It is not Beauty I demand* (which, in its Carolinity, deceived the very elect in the person of Francis Turner Palgrave) is quite a different thing; *The Enchanted Lyre, The Maiden's Grave* are not mere banjo music, and *Sylvia,* though much of its main stuff is of very little worth, is spangled all over with most delightful snatches of lyric.

At his very best, however, Darley never reached the astonishing intensity and poignancy of poetic appeal which is found in a few things of Thomas Lovell Beddoes, the youngest, as Darley was the eldest, of the group, and which, if concentrated only in these few, diffuses itself into a strange poetic atmosphere all over his fantastic work. Beddoes was unquestionably mad when, just before his death, he made repeated and, at last, successful attempts at suicide; this madness, beyond much question, had developed itself in, at least, the latter half of his not very short life; and it may be doubted whether he was ever entirely sane. But, as has been remarked over and over again, madness will neither make nor break a poet; and it is a chance whether it stimulates or checks, colours or discolours, his work. Both the bad and the good results are clear enough in the poems—dramatic, after a fashion, and lyrical, after the best fashion—which we have from Beddoes.

The main constituent of this work is a play entitled *Death's Jest Book* or *The Fool's Revenge,* which was ready for publication as early as the spring of 1829. It was referred by the author to B. W. Procter and other timid critics, and pronounced by them, perhaps naturally, but unfortunately, to require revision. Beddoes submitted, and re-wrote it again and again, but never got it finished. After his death, it was published, but with what regard to the variants we do not know. He had earlier, at Oxford, published two much slighter productions, *The Bride's Tragedy* and *The Improvisatore,* and his remains furnished his friend Kelsall (to whom they were left and who handed them over to Browning) with some miscellaneous poems, which were increased when Beddoes's work was reprinted by Edmund Gosse with Browning's permission. Beddoes has been called a link between Shelley and Browning himself. He was an avowed devotee of Shelley, and took a warm interest in the task of bringing out that poet's posthumous poems. But there are also strong influences of Keats in his poems (see, especially, *Pygmalion* and *Letter from Oxford*), and, on the whole, the real filiation of his work, both dramatic and lyric, goes straight back to the larger Elizabethan time. Yet, though the influence of such writers as Tourneur and Webster is obvious, it is a great mistake to take him, as has been done, for a mere composer of Elizabethan *pastiche*, a word for which we have unluckily no exact synonym in English, though we have plentiful examples of the thing. Beddoes, in many ways, is intensely and, indeed, prophetically modern; he was a trained physician and physiologist; there is not a little of modern science in his thought, and his reader is often reminded of Ibsen in his more poetical plays. It is not quite clear whether *Death's Jest Book*, as we have it, is a made text out of the three distinct versions which were said to exist, or merely one of them; and this makes it very difficult to judge it as a whole. Of the frequent greatness of the blank verse and of the still more exceptional greatness of the lyric found in it and outside it, there can be little dispute among impartial judges. For some years, *Dream-Pedlary* has even been near, if it has not actually incurred, that rare but formidable danger which attends enthusiastic laudation by the few, at first adopted by the many and then kicked against by them. But the *Dirge* for Wolfram ('If thou wilt ease thine heart') is fully its equal; and such a pair it will be almost impossible to find in English outside the work of the very greatest of our poets. The same touch, if not the same completeness of working, may be found in many other places. There may be more doubt about Beddoes's complete success anywhere in the line of grim humour such as *Old Adam, the carrion crow* and the *Song of the Stygian Naiades*. But, over these, as over all the rest, there hovers that atmosphere of real, if seldom perfect, poetry referred to above. To be content with this, or even to perceive it, is, no doubt, not for everybody. It is easy to dismiss Beddoes as a mere producer of

> Fantastic beauty, such as lurks
> In some wild poet when he works
> Without a conscience or an aim[1],

and of that not very often; it is easy to dismiss him as an Elizabethan copyist; not least easy, perhaps, to obtain the credit of wise moderation by this and that admission. But, historically,

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[1] Was Tennyson thinking of Beddoes? *In Memoriam* and *Death's Jest Book* were published in the same year, 1850. But, also, in that year, Miss Zoe King, Beddoes's cousin, met Tennyson on his wedding tour and lent him a copy of Beddoes, whom he 'rated highly.'

Beddoes is an invaluable instance of that curious influence of transition periods on which we may say something true if not new at the close of this chapter. Personally and individually, he is an instance of the kind of poet whom it would be more or less preposterous to call a great poet, and who yet has produced things which only the greatest poets can match.

The remaining members of this group, though sometimes interesting both as persons and as poets, must be treated more briefly, for they are rather 'curiosities of literature' than great men of letters. More especially does this position belong to Wells. In a long life (very little disturbed, it would seem, either by the legal or the professorial business which, at times, he attempted), he produced nothing but a few prose stories and tales, and the remarkable closet-drama *Joseph and his Brethren*, originally published, 1823—4, under a pseudonym. We are told that three versions of Beddoes's chief play exist in manuscript: and it appears not impossible that three different versions of Wells's will some day exist in print. For he very considerably altered the original in the reprint which, fifty years later, was brought about by the enthusiasm of the poet Swinburne, and he is said to have altered that reprint itself still more with manuscript corrections and additions not yet made public. The drama, undoubtedly, is a remarkable production; but it is probable that the very high praise bestowed on it has been the cause of a good deal of disappointment even to readers who were quite prepared to admire. The character of Phraxanor (Potiphar's wife) has a certain force and even original touches poetically expressed; but the enormous verbiage of her speeches drowns the spirit of these. Wells is said to have burnt several volumes of manuscript poetry and prose; and, although some fine things might have been found in them, it is difficult to be very sorry. For, at first, in all cases, he admittedly wrote with ostentatious contempt of the most ordinary care; and, if the current version of *Joseph and his Brethren* is a fair specimen of his attempts at revision, care would probably have done very little good.

His friend, eulogist and very close contemporary Richard H. Horne presented himself somewhat more seriously as a candidate for distinction in letters, both prose and verse. He was a man of many adventures in life as well as in literature, but a fanciful moralist might have drawn evil prognostications, and might now draw tragic warning, from the rather wellknown story of Horne snow-balling Keats when the latter, as 'an old boy,' came to his Edmonton school, where Horne actually was a scholar. Horne bombarded the temple or castle of the muses with many balls of both verse and prose for many years; but they were apt to be cold shot. His *New Spirit of the Age*, written, it is true, in a sort of collaboration with Mrs Browning (then Miss Barrett), contains, with a few better things, some of the most inept criticism in English; and what it is possible to know of his immense journey-work does not seem to be much better. His tragedies, from *Cosmo de Medici* and *The Death of Marlowe* (both of 1837) to *Laura Dibalzo*, more than forty years later, are, as wholes, rather indigestible, with really poetic passages here and there, but not enough to season the rest. His own rather puerile and, at first, at least, somewhat costly, jest of publishing his one poem of merit, the quasi-epic *Orion*, at the price of one farthing, though it may have attracted attention at first, has, probably, done more harm than good in the long run by inviting cheap epigram. *Orion* is worth a very considerable number of farthings, and, provided that its reader goes no farther in its author's work, he will probably think Horne a better poet than any other of the group here immediately associated with him. It is, no doubt, permeated by that dangerous notion about poetry illustrating the growth of a poet's mind for which Wordsworth, though he made atonement for it in his own case, was mainly responsible, and its allegory has offended some who have forgotten Hazlitt's capital phrase on this subject—that allegory will bite nobody if people will let it alone. In fact, the final passage, as to the end of Akinetos (the 'Great Unmoved'—the representative of obstinate conservatism, who is literally petrified at last), may commend itself, as really fine poetry, to persons who rather sympathise with Akinetos himself. Nor does this stand alone.

It was, perhaps, not surprising that, in 1831, with the great poets of the early nineteenth century all dead, silent or producing things hardly worthy of them, and with Tennyson and Browning but just visible to any, and actually seen by few, the Spenserians of the third Whitehead's[1] *Solitary* should have seemed to promise a poet. But, if the poem be examined carefully, it will be found to be little more than a clever mosaic of variously borrowed fancy, phrase and cadence, super-excellent as a prize poem, but, like most prize poems, possessing hardly any symptomatic or germinal evidence in it. At any rate, though before his dry- and wet-rot in the Bohemia of fancy and, latterly, the Australia of fact, Whitehead wrote one successful play, *The Cavalier*, one or two quasi-historical tales or novels of some merit (*Jack Ketch, Richard Savage*) and some other work, even his eulogists have only discovered in his later pieces a sonnet or two of distinction; (*As yonder Lamp in my Vacated Room* is that usually quoted[1]).

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[1] After Paul and William, Charles. The difference of the 'minority' of his predecessors and himself would make a fair text for a comparison of eighteenth and nineteenth century poetry of the lesser kind.

But sonnet-making itself gives a much higher place to the last of this group, Thomas Wade. He was a friend of the Kembles and was enabled by them to bring out three plays, the first two of which were successful, and the third, *The Jew of Arragon*, damned, while a fourth and fifth never saw the stage. He wrote various other things, was a journalist for years and left much unpublished; but his fame must rest on the curious volume—not very easy to obtain but quite worth possessing by any lover of poetry—somewhat pretentiously (as some, but not all, think) entitled *Mundi et Cordis: de rebus sempiternis et temporariis: Carmina*, which appeared in 1835. The 'brevities,' as its author calls them, in the same deliberate quaintness (it would be harsh to call it affectation, for Wade lives very fairly up to his style and title), which the volume contains, are not all sonnets (indeed, the book has an English sub-title *Poems and Sonnets*) nor are some of the best of them. But Wade had an admirable gift for this form, and wrote it, perhaps, as well as anyone, between Wordsworth and the Rossettis, except Charles Tennyson [Turner]. He was much under the influence of Shelley among his forerunners, and sometimes reminds one of Darley among his contemporaries; but he has a more even taste, if a less fiery imagination, than the author of *Nepenthe*. He has usually had the least justice done to him of all the group; and he can never be popular. But that atmosphere or *aura* of poetry which hangs about most of them, and about the character, of which a few words should be said later, are present in and round him in a vaguely diffused, most unboisterous, faintly coloured and perfumed manner which is worth the notice of the student of poetry.

The tendency of the group just discussed, with the notable exceptions of Hood and Praed, was not, on the whole, towards light or jocular verse; but, by those two exceptions and others, such verse was very well represented during the first thirty or forty years of the nineteenth century. It would, indeed, have been strange if things had been otherwise, for the eighteenth had kept unbroken the traditions, and had even increased the means, of this kind of poetry, with a positive extension of its varieties and range; while the greater writers of the actual period, in not a few cases, had shown no disinclination to be wisely foolish in proper places. With Anstey, Williams and Stevenson leading the way to the brilliant political lampooning of the *Rolliad*, of Wolcot and of the Canning group; with Southey founding the *macabre* ballad and Coleridge, occasionally, showing what he might have done in that way; with Moore as agreeably effervescent in grotesque as in sentiment; with Shelley capable, now and then, of an uncertain and flickering but humourous or 'humouresque' flash—there was no reason for anybody who had inclinations that way to be ashamed of indulging them. Moreover, the names of Swift and Prior were still, and justly, held great; and 'divine Nonsensia' (in the good, not contemptuous, sense) had counted most of the best English poets from Chaucer, through Shakespeare, downwards as her occasional chaplains. Comparatively early, too, not merely immediate popularity, but lasting and well-deserved reputation, was won by James and Horace Smith, with the ever welcome *Rejected Addresses*—a collection of parodies of Byron, Scott, Southey and other famous writers of the day which, though it may have been sometimes equalled, had, at its best, certainly never been, and never has been, surpassed for appositeness, good humour as well as humour positive and a lightness which, unlike that of most such work, has never become heavy since.

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[1] And 'vacated,' here, is not exactly a felicity. Whitehead was a friend of Dickens; and, at least, thought himself to have 'passed on' the composition of *Pickwick* to the greater writer. He suggests himself as a possible original for the reflections on 'Horace Kinch and the Dry-rot in Men' (*The Uncommercial Traveller*), though the circumstances are artistically altered: and though Dickens, no doubt, had more than one painful example in his mind.

Hood was thirteen and Praed was ten when *Rejected Addresses* appeared; and both, therefore, were now at an age suitable for such seed to fall into such soil. As was remarked above, in speaking of their serious and half-serious poems, the difference of attitude between them is very remarkable and interesting. That Hood had the deeper and higher poetical genius there can be no doubt, and it was probably not the mere necessities of hackwork which drove him, by reaction, into more definite extravaganza, more horseplay in word and verse, wilder acrobatics and pyrotechnics of punning and the like, when he put himself in the comic vein. It is impossible that a professional of this kind should not, in the actual language of the ring, 'miss his tip' sometimes; there are some people who (it may be thought, unhappily) cannot relish verbal tumbling and metrical fireworks at all; and there are others, less to be commiserated, who are soon satiated with either or both. The cruel kindness which, as mentioned, has accumulated not merely the sweepings of Hood's study, but the very rubbish of his literary dustbin more or less pyramidically on his memory, puts him at special disadvantage with all these classes of readers; perhaps with almost any reader who has not a critical sieve under his arm, with which, at need, he can sift away the slag and keep the metal. It is metal far from unattractive to anyone who likes good fun; and there are few places—that is to say books—where such an admirable 'pocket' of it, already pretty well sifted, and varied, from verse to prose, is to be found, as in *Up the Rhine* and in the cream of Hood's comic poems. But the difference of taste above referred to may always make it half needless and half useless to recommend this part of him. The line which has been, perhaps justly, selected as a test—

Rose knows those bows' woes

will always seem to some respectable people an enormous and disgusting puerility. By them, Hood should be generally avoided. Others, who can see in it not, indeed, one of the greatest achievements of human art and genius, but a relishable trifle quite capable of being enjoyed more than once or twice, should let themselves, not in the least pharisaically, say grace before and after it.

It was quite possible for Hood to avoid this style; and, without using, as in some of his most famous poems, the contrast of grimness or pathos, to do higher comedy, not farce at all, in verse. *The United Family* is a good, though very far from the only, instance of this. Nevertheless (for reasons which, no doubt, could be plausibly explained, but which are pretty obvious and not, after all, quite decisive), he is certainly surpassed by Praed in the highest class of what is called 'verse of society,' and especially in that kind of it which might be called pure high-comedy lyric. Fortune of birth and breeding, scholarship, easy temperament and circumstance; wide and, again, fortunate experience of the world; and several other things may be thought to be necessary to this; they certainly are found in company with it in Praed. Idiosyncrasy, in the strictest sense of an often misused word, was present in him in the highest degree; in a degree which could only be fully shown by detailed, and here impossible, contrasts with, say, Prior, Thackeray and the late Locker-Lampson. This idiosyncrasy was produced or affected not merely by the personal essentials or accidents noticed above, but by a curious convergence of the various poetical motives of the time—romantic. satiric, lyrical, musical, technical and other. There is in Praed something of Scott, something of Byron, something of Moore, something of Canning and something of others; and, yet, the whole blend is Praed and nothing and nobody else. He, in his turn, certainly taught something to Thackeray; but, if there is less depth in his combination of romance and humour than in his greatest pupil's, there is a certain buoyancy and, at the same time, a calm, in the immortal *Letter of Advice*, which is nowhere else to be found. The way in which Praed picked out the stanza improved downwards from Gay and others to Byron, perfected it still further and infused into it at once the passion of *I enter thy garden of Roses* and the spirit and zest of *Molly Mog*, is one of the pleasantest studies in poetical technique and one of the most useful refutations of the fallacy which would make of that subject an affair of 'chalk and blackboard.' But, if anyone shudders at technicalities, let him pass them by and content himself with the more exoteric charms of the poem just mentioned, of *The Vicar*, of *Twenty Eight and Twenty Nine* and *Goodnight to the Season*, of the first *Letter from Teignmouth* and of a dozen others. Perhaps the already mentioned tender-cruel mercy of reprinting has been exercised too freely even in this case; but, to complain much of it would be to commit that sin which Thackeray himself has stigmatised and to ask for 'a flounder that was all back.'

The most remarkable book—as distinguished from scattered pieces of comic or semi-comic verse—in the peculiar style which Southey had almost originated and which Hood and Praed had developed, was published, some of its parts having already, but not long before, appeared, much later than the work of either of the pair, by a man who, nevertheless, was as much Praed's elder as he was Southey's junior. Richard Harris Barham was, indeed, not a young man when, long before the beginning of *The Ingoldsby Legends*, he wrote anonymously that famous parody of Wolfe's *Corunna* poem (see below) which was attributed to all sorts of better known persons; and he was an active, and by no means unclerical, parson, as well as a not very successful novelist, before, at nearly fifty, he found the remarkable vocation which he obeyed, without a sign of impoverishment or exhaustion for some decade before his too early, but not very early, death. How little the horse-collar was Barham's single vestment or instrument was shown, once for all, by the beautiful lines, not in the least requiring their Chattertonian pseudo-archaism of spelling, *As I lay a thynkynge*, which are said to have been his last, and which, no doubt, supply the one and sufficient evidence of the undercurrent of feeling necessary to keep fresh and in full flavour such humour as his. For it is a most unfortunate mistake—though one which has been constantly committed, sometimes with the quaintest explosions of virtuous misunderstanding—to regard the fun of *The Ingoldsby Legends* as merely 'high jinks.' Its period was, of course, the period of that curious institution, and there *is* the 'high jinks' quality in the *Legends*. Yet Barham, on the whole, belonged not to the school of his friend Hook always, of Christopher North too often and of Maginn, father Prout and some others, save on the rarest occasions; but, rather, to that, just mentioned, of Hood, Praed and Thackeray himself, who, by the way, imitated *Ingoldsby* very early. High-principled but feeble-minded persons actually regarded the *Legends* at the time, and have regarded them since, as an infamous attempt to undermine the high church movement by ridicule; as a defiling of romance; as a prostitution of art; as a glorification of horseplay and brutality; as a perilous palliation of drunkenness, irreverence, loose and improper conduct of all sorts. With quite infinitely less than the provocation of Rabelais, allegations and insinuations of faults not much less heinous than those charged by anti-Pantagruelists were raised, while, for a decade or two, more recently, has been added the sneer of the superior person at 'fun out of fashion.' On the other hand, it is a simple fact that not a few fervent high-churchmen, medievalists, men zealous for religion and devotees of romance, have been among *Ingoldsby's* most faithful lovers. For they have seen that 'Love me and laugh at me' is a motto not in the least self-contradictory, and that the highest kind of laughter is impossible without at least a little love, and a very high kind of love compatible with at least a grain of laughter.

To go straight to the point, *The Ingoldsby Legends* are examples of the style started by Southey in *The Old Woman of Berkeley* and other pieces, raised to much higher power both of humour and of poetry and carried out on an instrument of verse which, though it owes a great deal to the poet laureate's principles and practice, attempts variations of a far bolder, more intricate and more symphonic kind. No one who has not studied the *Legends* from this point of view knows how sure the artist is in handling and fingering all his most complicated arabesques and gambollings. The defects of taste which had been by no means uncommon in the master and which are certainly a danger of the kind, have been, as stated above, enormously magnified by objectors. They may, sometimes, exist; but they are never very heinous, and they are, to a fairly catholic appreciation, carried off by such a flood of fantastic humour, quaint miscellaneous erudition (like Sterne's and Southey's mixed), vivid picture, happy conversation (always a difficult thing to manage in verse), pointed phrase, narrative felicity and refreshing medley of style and subject, that only a critic deaf and blind to the merits can pay much attention to the defects.

Not the least interesting feature of the present division is the reappearance, in something like force, of poetesses. They had, indeed, not been wanting since Lady Winchilsea, who, at her birth, or soon afterwards, took, all unwitting, the torch from the hands of 'Orinda' and handed it on in almost the same fashion to the authoress of the *Prayer for Indifference*[1]. There had been, more recently, Anna Seward, that swan of Lichfield, who sang so much and so long before her death that she has been entirely inaudible since; and Hannah More that 'powerful versificatrix.' At one time, Anna Letitia Barbauld, by some extraordinary inspiration, had uttered the wonderful last stanza of her 'Life' poem:

> Life! we've been long together,

while, at other times, she had atoned partly for failing to understand *The Ancient Mariner* by writing one of the best of the many imitations of Collins's *Evening*, and some verses, more or less 'sacred,' which are not contemptible. Helen Maria Williams, though she became nearly as bad as any Della Cruscan, had, sometimes, been better. But the first thirty years or so of the nineteenth century, even before the definite appearance of Mrs Browning, which does not concern us here, saw, in Joanna Baillie, Mrs Hemans and 'L.E.L.,' three persons who, for no short time and to no few or incompetent persons, seemed to be poetesses; while there were one or two others, such as Caroline Bowles, Southey's second wife and, still more, Sara Coleridge, daughter of 'S.T.C.' and sister of Hartley, who deserve to be added to them.

The long life of Joanna Baillie began earlier than that of any of the poets of either sex, outside the retrospect of the last paragraph, who have been mentioned in this chapter, except Rogers; and it continued, like his, till the second half of the nineteenth century. But, except for a tincture of romantic subject, her work bears, and might be expected to bear, the colour of the eighteenth. It consists of a large number of plays—*On the Passions* and miscellaneous—which were by no means intended to be

[1] Mrs Greville.

closet-dramas merely, and several of which made more or less successful appearances on the actual stage; of a certain number of lyrics—some in Scots dialect, some in literary English—and of miscellaneous poems of no consequence. The strictly theatrical value of the plays does not much concern us here. Although some fight for it was made at the time by her friends (who were numerous, as she well deserved), it has long been practically 'confessed and avoided.' Whether the poetical value is much greater may be doubted. The composition of most of them, in contrasted exemplification of 'the passions,' as passions, impresses some readers as a sort of involuntary caricature of Jonson's humour-play in tragedy as well as comedy; the verse is remarkably unstimulant, though correct enough, and the general scenery, character-drawing and so forth are essentially of the time before Scott, that is to say, the time when the historic sense, whether in verse or prose fiction, was not. Her lyrics in Scots have been praised by compatriots; but this is largely because they consist of that curious re-hashing of old Scottish ballad- and poem-motive and phrase which the consummate but dangerous example of Burns has vulgarised for the last hundred years; of those not in dialect, *The Chough and Crow* and *Good night* have a sort of traditional reputation, which they do not ill deserve, as pleasant, soundhearted, carolling verse. Scott's excessive praise of Joanna needs, of course, allowance for personal friendship as well as for his general critical kindliness; but the fact that it was also due to his recognition of a temper in life and literature akin to his own deserves, in turn, similar recognition. In fact, Joanna, though never in the least mannish, had something virile about her—as of a ladylike and poetical Mrs Bagnet. Now, the world is never likely to be over-provided in life, and still less in literature, with Mrs Bagnets.

A little more of this not unfeminine virility would have been a great advantage to the two poetesses next to be discussed, though the first of them, at least, undoubtedly had more poetry than Joanna. Both Felicia Dorothea Browne (Mrs Hemans) and Laetitia Elizabeth Landon (L.E.L.) were very popular in their own days, and the first-named has retained a success of esteem with some not despicable judges, together with a hold on actual memory, through 'The Boy stood on the Burning Deck,' and one or two other poems. One may go further, and say that a certain amount of injustice has been done to both, and especially to Mrs Hemans, during the last half, if not three quarters, of a century by Thackeray's 'Miss Bunion.' It was in no way a personal caricature, for Mrs Hemans was almost beautiful, and L.E.L. decidedly, though irregularly, pretty. But it hit their style, and especially their titles, hard, and their sentiment has long been out of fashion. Miss Landon, indeed (whose fate seems still to be wrapped in mystery for some commentators, though, as a matter of fact, it was almost completely cleared up years ago), can never be raised, in the most careful and judicial estimate, to anything but a somewhat interesting historical position. Her technique, though some charitable souls have seen a tendency to improvement at the last, was deplorably bad; and her popularity set a most unfortunate precedent, in this respect, for women verse-writers. Her sentiment and handling of her themes watered out the examples she took from Scott, Byron and Moore, with an equally deplorable excess of original 'gush,' and it is really difficult to name a single poem which can be produced as a competent diploma-piece. But, at one time, she seemed to be a sort of graceful substitute for a pillar: Beddoes, who had real critical power, who wrote as differently as possible and who was not mealy-mouthed, described her, in 1825, as, after the tropical, sunset-like disappearance of Shelley, 'the tender full faced moon of our darkness,' though he certainly added 'milk-and-watery.' She is a sign of the time between Keats and Tennyson, and, if her work does not even, in the words of one of Campbell's best poems, 'show where a garden has been,' it does show where a garden might have been, if time and the muses had been more propitious.

The claims of Mrs Hemans are much less hypothetical. If not immaculate in form, she is much better than L.E.L. (who, by the way, wrote one of her least bad poems on Mrs Hemans's death); her models, though they certainly included Byron and Scott, were Coleridge and Wordsworth also, so far as she could manage it; and the dangerous quality of 'Mooreishness' does not much appear in her. Her faults—recognised as such even by generous admirers in her own days, and by charitable critics since—are want of originality, want of intensity and, worst of all, a third, connected with this want of intensity but not quite identical with it and much more wide-ranging, want of concentration. She died at a little over forty, and suffered much from ill-health; yet, she published over twenty volumes of verse in her lifetime, which filled a more closely printed collection of six after her death. Some of the constituents of these, it is true, were narrative poems of length, which, after the not wholly beneficent example of her elders and betters, could be measured out by the long hundred without much difficulty.

But, a great many more are those short poems which, except under the force of some extraordinary inspiration such as she hardly ever enjoyed, take a long time and the vital power of a long time to bring to perfection. There is little evidence of any such accumulation and expenditure of poetic energy on her part. The greatest thing she did, *England's Dead*—her most original, her most thoughtful—lacks consummateness and inevitableness of expression, either in the splendid, or in the simple, style. *Casabianca* is less unequal in itself, but is on a lower level; and, so far as expression goes, the equally wellknown *Better Land* is lower still, though it is excellent milk well crumbled with good bread for babes. *They grew in beauty side by side* has the same quality, which one is reluctant to depreciate or ridicule, but which certainly excites more esteem than enthusiasm. It takes the sea and death, two of the very few motives which never fail to draw poetry out of any soul that has poetry in it, to bring her subject and her expression to a fairly equal level in—

> What hid'st thou in thy treasure caves and cells?
> Leaves have their time to fall, etc.

Now, the soul of Mrs Hemans was a poetic soul, but it was not a strong one and it failed to follow steadily what star it had.

The 'unfulfilled renown' which Sara Coleridge won with *Phantasmion*—and which would have been almost certainly fulfilled, had she sacrificed less of her time and energies to the piety of putting some order into the chaos of her father's 'remains'—was derived not least from the verse with which that pleasant book is sprinkled. This bears, like her brother Hartley's, a curious sense of incompleteness about it; its grace and perfume and suggestive melody seem to be but half-born. *One face alone* is worthy of not the least of the Caroline poets, and so is *False Love, too long thou hast delayed.* The brief and strong defence of 'the fairy way of writing,' in the *Envoy*, deserves to be much more widely known than it is. But most of the songs are in undertones. They have, however, an air of suppressed power which is absent from those of her amiable and excellent step-aunt. Caroline Bowles, though no relation to the author of the half-accidentally famous sonnets, and much less voluminous, was, as a poetess, very much what he was as a poet. Her little verses are neither pretentious nor silly; the sentiment has hardly anything that is mawkish and still less that is rancid about it; but it is only the cowslip wine of poetry. It is unfortunate that not merely the general subject, but one or two internal touches of her *Mariner's Hymn* may make some readers think of Christina Rossetti's incomparably superior *Sleep at Sea*; but there is no real connection between them, and *The Mariner's Hymn* deserves its own not too low place.

The most interesting groups which the subject of this chapter offers have been noticed; but, before we come to individuals, some of whom, also, are interesting, one or two other batches of minor bards may be dealt with. For traditional dignity of form, though certainly for little other merit, a small band of professed epic writers may have precedence, and they may themselves be as properly headed by the laureate for nearly a quarter of a century, Henry James Pye, who crowned the efforts in all sorts of verse which he made during close on that time—prize poems and Pindaric odes, verse-essays on beauty and ballooning, and the dreadful duty ditties of his post—with an *Aelfored* in six books of technically faultless, but poetically null, eighteenth century couplets. Pye, though a convenient butt for the usual anti-laureate jokes, was, in fact, not so much a bad poet as no poet at all[1]. He was not specially rhetorical, or specially silly, or specially extravagant, or ridiculously sentimental and pseudo-romantic. His house was the house of typically eighteenth century verse, empty and swept of all poetical life, not even garnished by any poetical stuff, not inhabited by devils at all—but simply empty. He is thus an interesting figure in a historical museum of the subject.

Not very much Pye's junior was William Sotheby, a friend of Scott and other good men, and, apparently, quite a good man himself; but one who certainly ran his neck into danger of, if he did not fully deserve, the gibbeting which befell another poetaster by epics, dramas, translations, odes and everything that readers of poetry could wish or not wish. Edwin Atherstone may be not unfairly called the Blackmore of the nineteenth century, with his *Fall of Nineveh*, in thirty books, and others to suit, besides prose romances. A certain grandiosity may, perhaps, be allowed him; as, also, to the still younger, but even more long-lived, John Abraham Heraud (Thackeray's not unkindly treated original of 'Jawbrahim Heraudee'). It is doubtful whether anyone living can boast of having read Atherstone and Heraud through; but they might be more preferable to the galleys than the shorter and not uncommonly read work of Robert Pollok, who, having barely thirty years of life to set against their eighty or ninety, might, perhaps, have equalled them in production had he lived. His youth, his profession (he was a licentiate of one of the sectarian churches in Scotland), his ill-health, his early death and so forth, together with the exceptional propriety in sentiment of *The Course of Time*, have secured not merely reading, but some professions of admiration for it. But the only thing that can sustain attention to its ponderous commonplace and *gradus* decorations is a search for the fine things that have been discovered in it. A conscientious enquirer must clearly read it through in this quest; if he is not more fortunate than the present writer, he will reach the end without having found them. In fact, if anyone cared to do so, it would be as easy as it would be cruel and unnecessary to treat Pollok as Macaulay treated his immediate successor, Robert Montgomery (born Gomery). But the thing has already been done, in the case of *The Omnipresence of the Deity* and *Satan*, once for all, and by no means so unfairly as it is sometimes the fashion to say now. There are passages in both Pollok and Montgomery which a hasty, forgetful, or, perhaps, actually not very well-read, person might take for poetry. But, in no case will any real originality, either of substance or of expression, be found; nor is there, in either versifier, the slightest approach to that technical excellence which, whether it be ever a supreme positive quality or not, certainly covers a multitude of minor defects. Nor, finally, is there, in either, that suggestion of something better—that *aura* of unachieved success—for which full (some may think too full) allowance is made here.

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[1] As a prose writer, Pye was far from contemptible. He had a fancy for commentaries and summaries. His *Summary of the Duties of a J.P.* (he was himself Bow street magistrate) was found useful, but hardly concerns us here. His *Commentary* on Shakespeare's commentators, and that appended to his translation of the *Poetics*, contain some noteworthy matter. A man, who, born in 1745, could write 'Sir Charles Grandison is a much more unnatural character than Caliban,' may have been a poetaster but was certainly not a fool.

After swans, wrens; though the specific quality, not very excellent in either case, is, perhaps, a little better in the smaller birds. It was impossible that the remarkable achievement, and still more the immense popularity, of Moore should not produce a large following of imitators, for most of whom the 'twitter' which was protested against above in his case is scarcely an injurious term. Of writers already noticed, as has been frankly confessed, there are touches of it even in Hood and Praed, much more in others; while it is strong in L. E. L., and not weak in Mrs Hemans. It is difficult to put Bryan Waller Procter ('Barry Cornwall') in any higher group than this, though the allocation may surprise some readers. Procter's great personal popularity; his long life (during the latter part of which he wisely did nothing to compete with the far greater poets who had arisen since his early days, and provoked no enquiry into the grounds of his former acceptance), and some domestic accidents connected with the character of his wife and the talents of his daughter, saved him alike from total forgetfulness, and from the unpleasant revulsion or revolution which death often brings upon a man's fame. He was very well read, and had had the wits and taste to catch up beautiful old rhythms. He would sometimes mould pretty things on them, as in *Sit down, sad soul* and the *Song for Twilight.* But, anyone who wishes not to disturb the pleasant atmosphere of praise and affection which has been raised round Procter by great writers from Lamb to Swinburne had better not explore the context of the still vaguely known lines

The sea! the sea! the open sea!
The blue, the fresh, the ever free!

which Ethel Newcome most excusably quoted. Nor, with Moore to go to, do we want things like

O! the summer night
Has a smile of light,
And she sits on a sapphire throne.

The much more hardly used Thomas Haynes Bayly, to some extent, deserved the ridicule which has fallen on him, by indulgences in positive silliness, and by faults of taste which Procter never could have committed. Nobody can have done more to bring 'the drawing-room ballad' into the contempt from which it has never fully emerged than Bayly did by his effusions. Even now, when we seldom mention them, and the songs themselves are never heard, their names are, in a way, familiar, if only contemptuously so. Perhaps, contempt might be qualified by a little affection if they were more read, for there is pathos and (independently of the famous composers who 'set' him) music in Bayly. But it is too often, if not invariably, frittered away. And it may be specially noted that there is hardly any easier and completer method of appreciating that undefinable mixture of breeding and scholarship with which Praed has been credited above than by comparing the pretty numerous pieces in which Bayly either directly imitates, or unconsciously coincides with, Praed's society-verse style.

Perhaps the position of the most twittering of all the twitterers has been wrongly assigned to William Robert Spencer, of whom both Scott and Byron thought well, and who, at least, was a translator of some merit. And the pathetic end of Laman Blanchard, celebrated and mourned by Bulwer and by Thackeray (Johnstone and Maxwell agreeing for once!), neither makes nor mars his rank as, perhaps, the best of this bunch—a lesser Hood, both in serious and light verse, but with the same combination of faculties, and with a skill in the sonnet which Hood more seldom showed.

Community of circumstance, of misfortune and (in part) of subject has linked Robert Bloomfield and John Clare together. Both, though Bloomfield was not 'tied to the soil' by birth, were agricultural labourers, or, as Bloomfield's own much better phrase has it, 'farmers' boys'; both made themselves authors under the consequential difficulties; both were patronised; neither made the best use of the patronage; and both died mad, though, in Bloomfield's case, actual insanity has been questioned. Nor is there quite so much dissimilarity between the poetic value of their work, if the poems of Clare published during his lifetime be taken alone, as readers of the high, and not ill-deserved, praise sometimes bestowed on the younger poet might expect. The late Sir Leslie Stephen, indeed, took a low view of Clare's production as a whole; but 'asylum verses' were not the kind of poetry that generally appealed to that accomplished critic. They certainly distinguish Clare from Bloomfield, from whom even madness or approach to madness did not extract anything better than a sort of modernising of Thomson, most creditable as produced under difficulties and entitled to the further consideration that, when he first produced it, the newer poetry had hardly begun to appear, and that nothing but eighteenth century echoes could possibly be expected. Charles Lamb, who never went wrong without good cause, and who, on no occasion, was an unamiably 'superior' critic, thought that Bloomfield had 'a poor mind,' and there is certainly nothing in his work to indicate that it was a rich one, poetically speaking. Lamb put Clare higher, even on the work he knew, and his judgment was eventually justified; but it may be questioned whether the appeal of the volumes on which he formed it is, except in technique, much higher than Bloomfield's. As was certain to be the case in 1820, as compared with 1800, the stock couplet versification and diction of the eighteenth century are replaced by varied metres, a more natural vocabulary, and a general attempt at lyrical quality. The sense of the country may not be more genuine in Clare than in his elder, but it is more genuinely expressed; still, there is constant imitation, not merely of Goldsmith and Thomson, Beattie and Shenstone, but of Cowper and Burns, and, save now and then (*The Last of March* is a favourable instance), nature is not very freshly seen[1].

Yet, even in these early poems, the sonnets, with that strange magic of the form which has often brought out of poets the best that was in them, contain poetic signs which are nowhere to be found in Bloomfield, and the poems written during the miserable later years—for Clare, unlike many luckier lunatics, was not only mad but miserable in his madness—confirm these signs almost as well as could be expected. The wonderful late lines

> I am—yet what I am, who cares or knows?—

one of the greatest justifications of Waller's master stroke as to

> The soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed—

are, indeed, far above anything else that Clare ever wrote, but they show what he might have written. And other poems[2] among these sad waifs exhibit, with greater art, the truthfulness of that 'country sense' to which he had been unable to give full poetic expression earlier. No such results of suffering will be found in Bloomfield's songs, which he continued to publish up to the year before his death. For nature had made him only a versifier; while she made Clare a poet.

In passing from groups or batches to individuals, an accidental link to the last-mentioned writer, in madness and in sonnet writing, may be found in a curious person, who, like others, owes his survival in literary history to Southey, and who might, perhaps, have been dealt with in the last volume. Among the 'disdained and forgotten' ones who were included in *Specimens of Later English Poetry*, was John Bampfylde, a member of one of the best Devonshire families, a Cambridge man and a suitor of Reynolds's niece Miss Palmer, who figures often in Madame d'Arblay's *Diary* and in other books of the Johnsonian library. Bampfylde led an unhappy and disorderly life, and died mad; but, a decade before Bowles, he had published a tiny volume of sonnets, two of which Southey reprinted as 'among the most original in English,' with a couple of other pieces from manuscript. The phrase 'original' would seem to have attracted surprise from some of the very few persons who have dealt with Bampfylde; but Southey was not wont to use words lightly, and it is clear what he meant. Except for Warton (who was a friend of Bampfylde, was made the subject of one of his sonnets and was clearly his host at a dinner[1] at Trinity, Oxford, which forms the subject of another), there were few sonneteers in 1779, and Bampfylde may well share some of the praise which has been given to Bowles, as an 'origin.' His own language is frankly Miltonic ('Tuscan air' actually appears in the Trinity piece), but the greater number of his sonnets are entitled *Evening*, *Morning*, *The Sea*, *Country enjoyment* and so forth, and the opening of the poem *To the River Teign*, first printed by Southey, though classicised (after Milton and Gray) in diction, does not ill carry out the latter poet's example (in his letters if not in his poems) of direct attention to actual 'vales and streams.' Of an older birth date, too, than most of his companions in the present chapter, though not than Mrs Barbauld, Rogers, or Pye, was the much-travelled, many-languaged, many-friended and many-scienced, but short-lived and eccentric John Leyden. Leyden's ballads, especially *The Mermaid*, have been highly praised, but a truthful historic estimate must class them with the hybrid experiments numerous between Percy's *Reliques* and *The Ancient Mariner* and not completely avoided even by Scott himself, Leyden's great friend and panegyrist, at the opening of his career. Of his longer poems, *Scenes of Infancy* and others, few except partial judges have recently had much good to say.

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[1] It has been suggested, and is not improbable, that the early volumes were tampered with, and 'prettified' generally, by the publishers; of course, with the best intentions.

[2] Known only from the *Life* by Cherry; but reproduced, in part, by Palgrave, Gale and Symons in selections. Clare seems to have left voluminous manuscripts, but their existence and whereabouts are, largely, unknown. The suspicions of 'tinkering' referred to above make a complete and thoroughly authenticated edition very desirable.

There remain some dozen or half score of individual poets, who are, most of them, more definitely of the transitional character which pervades this chapter, and who, while illustrating, in different respects and degrees, the general characteristics which will be set forth at its close, neither exhibit any special community with each other nor possess power sufficient to entitle them to long separate notice. If any demur is made to this last sentence, it would probably be in the cases of the western poets, both of them in Anglican orders, Robert Stephen Hawker and William Barnes. Of these, Hawker, at least, would seem to have had fire enough in him to have made him a much greater poet than he was. He was old enough to belong to the days of literary mystification, and his best known poem, the *Song of the Western Men*, though quite original except its refrain[1], took in, as a genuine antique, not merely Dickens, which is not surprising, but Scott and Macaulay, which is. There is, however, nothing in the filling up of this poem which scores of other pens might not have written. *The Silent Tower of Bottreau*, sometimes called *The Bells of Bottreaux*, is very much more of a diploma piece, and, perhaps, *Queen Gwennyvar's Round* ('Naiad for Grecian Waters') would, if one word were altered, be the best of all. But *Pater Vester Pascit illa*, *The Sea Bird's Cry*, all the special *Morwenna* poems (referring to the patron saint of his remote and beautiful parish Morwenstow) and not a few others of the shorter pieces have no common poetry in them. Hawker was old when he was 'induced' (a rather ominous word) to commit to writing a long poem, which he had thought of for years, entitled *The Quest of the Sangraal*; and he only wrote one complete book or 'chant' of it. But the fragment shows promise of original treatment; and its blank verse is full of vigour and independence.

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[1] After dinner, 'Phyllis and Chloe' came in. The frequentation of college rooms by ladies was certainly not so frequent then as now, but the sonneteer takes pains to tell us that everything was strictly proper.

In order to put Barnes satisfactorily in his place, a longer discussion of dialect poetry than would here be fitting is almost necessary, and some notice, at least, of the curious philological craze, by which, following in the distant footsteps of Reginald Pecock, he would have revolutionised the English language by barring Latin compounds and abstractions, might not be superfluous. But it must suffice to say that, in his case more than in most others, acceptance or rejection (at least polite laying aside) as a whole is necessary. No single piece of Barnes, one can make bold to say, is possessed of such intrinsic poetical quality that, like the great documents of Burns, it neither requires the attractions of dialect to conciliate affection, nor is prevented from exciting disgust by the repulsion of dialect. All alike are permeated by pleasant and genuine perception of country charms[2];

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[1] 'And shall Trelawney die?' etc.

[2] In this respect, they are only rivalled by Clare's and, necessarily, are of happier tone.

by not unpleasant and genuine sentiment of a perfectly manly kind and by other good qualities of general literature. The verse is fluent and musical enough; the diction neither too 'aureate,' nor too 'vulgar,' nor too much loaded with actually dialectic words. Whether, in the absence of special poetic intensity and idiosyncrasy, the vesture of dialectic form repels or attracts, so as to procure rejection, or so as to deserve acceptance, of the 'middle kind of poetry' offered, must depend to such a degree upon individual taste that it seems unnecessary to speak positively or copiously on the question.

Some verse-writers of earlier date, and, at one time or another, of wider appeal, may now be mentioned, though they need not occupy us long. The quaker poet Bernard Barton has so many pleasant and certainly lasting literary associations—the friendship of Lamb and of Southey and of FitzGerald, the presentation of Byron in his most sensible, good-natured and *un*-Satanic aspect, and, in fact, numerous other evidences of his having possessed the rare and precious qualities which 'please many a man and never vex one'—that it would be a pity if anyone (except at the call of duty) ran the risk of vexation by reading his verse. He wrote, it is said, ten volumes of it, and there is no apparent reason, in what the present writer has read of them, why he or any man should not have written a hundred such, if he had had the time. Some of his hymns are among his least insignificant work.

The same is the case with James Montgomery, whom we might have mentioned with his unlucky namesake in the long-poem division, for he wrote several epics or quasi-epics, which were popular enough, entirely negligible, but not absurd. Some of his hymns, also, such as *Go to dark Gethsemane*, *Songs of praise the angels sang* and others, are still popular and not negligible, while he could sometimes, also, write verses (not technically 'sacred,' but devoted to the affections and moral feelings) which deserve some esteem. James Montgomery is one of the poets who have no irrefragable reason for existing, but whom, as existing, it is unnecessary to visit with any very damnatory sentence.

The condition of Ebenezer Elliott is different. He had much more poetical quality than Montgomery, and very much more than Barton, but he chose, too frequently, to employ it in ways which make the enjoyment of his poetry somewhat difficult. A man is not necessarily the worse, any more than he is the better, poet for being 'a Corn Law Rhymer,' whether his riming takes the form of defence or, as in Elliott's case, of denunciation. Dryden and Canning are not unpalatable to intelligent liberals, nor Shelley and Moore, in their political poems, to intelligent tories. But Elliott seldom (he did sometimes, as in his *Battle Song*) put enough pure poetic fire in his verse to burn up, or to convert into clear poetic blaze, the rubbish of partisan abuse which feeds his furnace. Still, he does, in this and one or two other instances even of the political poems, establish his claim, which is fortunately reinforced by a not inconsiderable number of poems sometimes lyrical, sometimes in other form, where a real love of nature finds expression in really poetic numbers. He began to write before the end of the eighteenth century, and, therefore, naturally enough, echoed Thomson and Crabbe for some time; but Southey, that Providence of poetical sparrows, took him in hand, and Elliott's later and better verse shows no copying, either of Southey himself or of any of the greater new poets, only a beneficial influence of the new poetry itself. In few, if any, instances do locality and environment provide more stimulating contrast than in the case of Sheffield (Elliott's abode) and its neighbourhood; and it is fair to say that, in very few instances, has a poet, not of the absolutely first class, taken better advantage of this opportunity.

In writing of another and, in a way, the most famous of Southey's *protégés*, Henry Kirke White, one has to remember not merely that 'Clio is a Muse,' but that, unlike some of her sisters, she has the duty of a female Minos or Rhadamanthus cast upon her. A very good young man, possessed of sound literary instincts, dying young, after a life not exactly unfortunate or unhappy, but, until nearly the last, not quite congenial and blameless always, he has been duly embalmed in two different but precious kinds of amber—Southey's perfect prose and Byron's fine verse-rhetoric. His biographer's private letters to White's brother increase the interest and sympathy which one is prepared to extend to the subject of so much good nature and good writing from such strikingly different quarters. But it is really impossible, after soberly reading Kirke White's actual performances, to regard him—to quote Shelley once more—as even a competitor for the inheritance of unfulfilled renown. A hymn or two—*The Star of Bethlehem* and the (in modern hymnals) much altered *Oft in danger, oft in woe*—some smooth eighteenth century couplets and a prettyish lyric or so on non-sacred subjects are the best things that stand to his credit. It is, of course, perfectly true that he died at twenty, and that, at twenty, many great poets have done little or not at all better. But, to draw any reasonable probability of real poetry in future from this fact requires a logic and a calculus which the literary historian should respectfully decline to practise. For, if the fact of not having written good poetry up to the age of twenty were sufficient to constitute a claim to poetical rank, mankind at large might claim that position; and, even if the fact of the claim were limited to having actually written bad or indifferent verse before that age, the *Corpus Poetarum* would be insupportably enlarged.

It is no small relief to turn from indifferent performance and undiscoverable promise to something, and that no small thing, not merely attempted but definitely done. Henry Francis Cary wrote some prose sketches of poets, not without merit, in continuation or imitation of Johnson's *Lives*; and was a translator on a large scale; but one of his efforts in this latter difficult and too often thankless business has secured him the place (and, again, it is no scanty or obscure one) which he occupies in English literature. It may be impossible to translate Dante into English verse after a fashion even nearly so satisfactory to those who can read the Italian poet, and who can estimate English poetry, as is the prose of J. A. Carlyle and A. J. Butler. But it may be very seriously doubted whether, of the innumerable attempts in verse up to the present day, any is so satisfactory to a jury composed of persons who answer to the just given specifications as Cary's blank verse. It is, no doubt, in a certain sense, a 'refusal'; but it is not in the least, in the sense of the famous passage of its original, a *rifiuto.* It is, on the contrary, a courageous, scholarly and almost fully justified recognition that attempts directly to conquer the difficulty by adopting rimed *terza rima* are doomed to failure; and that all others, in stanza or rimed verse of any kind, are evasions to begin with, and almost as certain failures to boot. It may even be said to be a further, and a very largely successful, recognition of the fact that blank verse, while 'nearest prose' in one sense, and, therefore, sharing its advantages, is almost furthest from it in another, in the peculiar qualities of rhythm which it demands. Cary does not quite come up to this latter requisition, but, unless Milton had translated Dante, nobody could have done so. Meanwhile, Cary's verse translation has gone the furthest and come the nearest. It is no slight achievement.

Two names famous in their way remain to be dealt with and the dealing may with both, as with Cary, be pleasant. Probably no 'single-speech' poet has attracted more attention and has been the subject of more writing than Charles Wolfe, several times questioned but quite unquestionable author of *The Burial of Sir John Moore.* The thing is one of those 'windfalls of the muses' for which one can only give the muses thanks. That it seems to have been originally a metrical paraphrase from Southey's admirable prose account of the facts in *The Annual Register* is not in the least against it; that, not merely the at once flaming and triumphant patriotism of the time (1817) but all competent judgment since has accepted it as one of the very best things of the kind is conclusive. It has been parodied not merely in one famous instance by Barham, but again and again; it was made the subject of a most ingenious mystification by father Prout; it may be cavilled at by merely pedantic criticism as facile, sentimental, claptrap and what not. But its facility is the facility of at least temporary inspiration; its sentiment is of the *sunt lacrimae rerum* and of no meaner description; if it appeals for the *plaudite,* it is to those whose applause is worth having. It has the rush and sweep of Campbell (no less a person than Shelley thought it might be his) without Campbell's occasional flaws. There is no doubt about it. But, when amiable persons, founding their belief on some amiable things (*To Mary* and so forth) which are included among Wolfe's *Remains,* suggest that we lost a major poet by Wolfe's death in consumption at the age of thirty-two, it is best to let the reply be silence.

On the other hand, there are reasons for thinking that, if Reginald Heber, bishop of Calcutta, had devoted himself entirely to letters, he might have been a poet, if not exactly of first rank, at least very high in the second. He has no 'rocket' piece like Wolfe's *Burial.* But, though he died at forty-three, and, for the last twenty years of his life, laboured faithfully at clerical work (latterly of the most absorbing kind), he showed a range and variety of talent in verse which should have taken him far. The story is well known how, during a visit of Scott to Oxford, Heber added impromptu on a remark from Sir Walter[1] the best lines of the rather famous Newdigate which he was about to recite. He added to hymnology some dozen of the best and best known attempts in that difficult art below its few masterpieces. He could write serio-comic verse in a fashion which suggests not imitation, but, in some cases, anticipation, of Moore, Praed and Barham at once. The Spenserians of his *Morte d'Arthur* need only to have been taken a little more seriously to be excellent; and the charming lines to his wife (*If thou wert by my side, my love*) in the late Indian days, unpretentious and homely as they are, remind one of the best side of the eighteenth century in that vein as shown in Lewis's *Winifreda.*

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[1] But it was before his baronetcy.

For there was still a considerable eighteenth century touch in Heber ; and the fact may conveniently introduce the few general remarks which have been promised to end this chapter. It is safe to say that all the poets here dealt with—major, minor, or minim, in their own division—display, not merely in a fanciful chronological classification but in real fact, the transition character which is very important to the historical student of literature, and very interesting to the reader of poetry who does not wilfully choose to shut his ears and eyes to it. Some, to use the old figure, are Januses of the backward face only ; or with but a contorted and casual vision forwards. Hardly one can be said to look steadily ahead, though, in the group to which particular attention has been devoted (that of Hood, Darley, Beddoes and others), the forward velleity, however embarrassed and unknowing, is clear. Their struggle does not avail much, but it avails something. In yet others, new kinds of subject, and even of outward form, effect an alteration which their treatment hardly keeps up.

Another point connected with this general aspect and itself of some importance for the general study of literary history is this—that, despite individual tendencies to imitation, all these poets show a general air as of sheep without a shepherd. They have—except Rogers, Bloomfield and one or two more among the minors and Campbell as a kind of major in a half vain recalcitrance—lost the catchwords and guiding rules of eighteenth century poetry, and they have not fully discovered those of the nineteenth. Even their elder contemporaries, from Wordsworth downwards, were fully comprehended by few of them; Shelley and Keats only dawn upon the youngest and not fully even on them. Now, it has sometimes been asserted that the complete dominance of any poet, poets or style of poetry is a drawback to poetic progress; and particular applications have been suggested in the case of the long ascendency of Tennyson in the middle and later nineteenth century. A comparison of the range of lesser poetry, as we have surveyed it, between 1800 and 1835, with that which appeared between 1840 and 1880, is not very likely to bear out this suggestion.

CHAPTER VI

REVIEWS AND MAGAZINES IN THE EARLY YEARS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Before the opening of the nineteenth century, the periodical review, such as we now know it, can hardly be said to have achieved a permanent place in general literature. There had, nevertheless, for a considerable time, been in existence periodical publications under the names reviews or magazines which served partly as chronicles, or records, or registers of past events, which conveyed information and which opened their pages, more or less, to original contributions of poetry and prose. *The Gentleman's Monthly Magazine*, founded in 1731, lived till 1868. It was rather in short-lived newspaper sheets, such as *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*, in the early days of the eighteenth century, and in their successors founded on the same lines, that (as has been shown in an earlier volume of this work) are to be found any adumbrations of the periodical essay and of the periodical fiction which formed the bulk of the reviews and magazines of a later date. In cases such as these, an author or authors of eminence had found the means of addressing the general public. Apart from them, the publication had no separate existence of its own, and, of course, it came to an end when they ceased to write. At the end of the eighteenth century, however, when political thoughts were stirring in men's minds, various magazines and reviews intended to promote sectional and party objects—high church, evangelical, tory, whig and extremist—sprang up and had a short life; but none of them achieved any authoritative position in the estimation of the general public.

Between the review and the magazine there was a very real distinction, and, though there has been a tendency on the part of each to borrow occasionally the special characteristics of the other, it has never been wholly left out of sight. The review made it its business to discuss works of literature, art and science, to consider national policy and public events, to enlighten its readers upon these subjects and to award praise or censure to authors and statesmen. It did not publish original matter, but confined itself to commenting upon or criticising the works and doings of others. Its articles professed to be the serious consideration of specified books, or of parliamentary or other speeches of public men. They were not, at least in form, independent and original studies. Even Macaulay's brilliant biographical essays appeared in *The Edinburgh Review* in the form of literary criticisms of books whose titles served him as the pegs upon which to hang his own study of the life and work of some great historical figure.

The magazine, on the other hand, was a miscellany. Though it contained reviews and criticisms of books, it did not confine itself to reviewing. To its pages, authors and poets sent original contributions. It admitted correspondence from the outside world; and it aimed at the entertainment of its readers rather than at the advocacy of views. Through the instrumentality of the magazine, much valuable and permanent literary matter first came before the public. In the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the two great reviews—*The Edinburgh* and *The Quarterly*—and two brilliant magazines—*Blackwood's* and *The London*—sprang to life, and, on the whole, they have conformed to the original distinctions of type.

With these reviews and magazines and their many imitators, a substantially new form was originated and developed in which literature of a high class was to find its opportunities. An aspiring author, in this way, might, and did, obtain a hearing without undergoing the risk and expense of publishing a book or a pamphlet. From the reception given to the new reviews, it is clear that, on the part of the general community, an intellectual thirst, once confined to the very few, was now keenly felt. Men wanted to know about books, and events, and to find them discussed; yet, till the eighteenth century had struck, it is hardly too much to say that able, honest and independent literary criticism was unknown. The spurious criticism of periodicals, notoriously kept alive by publishers to promote the sale of their own books, was, virtually, all that existed. In all these respects, a great and momentous change was at hand.

The system of anonymous reviewing in periodicals under the guidance and control of responsible editors, themselves men of strong individuality, soon led to the review acquiring a distinct personality of its own. By ninety-nine out of every hundred readers, the criticism expressed would be accepted as that of the review—of *The Edinburgh* or *The Quarterly*—and they would enquire no further. Among regular contributors, as, of course, with the editor, the feeling prevailed that articles in the review represented something more than the opinion, at the moment, of the individual writer. They were intended, in some sort, to give expression to the views of able and intelligent men who, generally speaking, had the same outlook on public affairs. Naturally, some contributors would gravitate towards Jeffrey and *The Edinburgh*, whilst others would turn to Gifford and *The Quarterly.* Without the practice of anonymity, combined with responsible and vigorous editorship, a lasting corporate personality could not have been acquired; and the chief reviews, though they would still have fulfilled a useful purpose, could not have become influential organs of public opinion.

The issue, in October 1802, of the first number of *The Edinburgh Review and Critical Journal*, published by Constable of Edinburgh and Longman and Rees of London, was an event of great significance, making a new departure in literary criticism, and opening a pathway, much trodden since, whereby men of ability and independence, of learning and of practical knowledge, have been enabled to render services to their countrymen and to literature, which it would be difficult to overestimate. To enlighten the mind of the public, and to guide its judgments in matters of literature, science and art, was the aspiration of the early *Edinburgh* reviewers; and, at the same time, in the region of politics, to promote what seemed to them to be a more liberal and popular system of government.

The name chosen for this contemplated organ of opinion was not new. Nearly half a century earlier, an *Edinburgh Review*, 'to be published every six months,' had made its appearance. It was to give some account of all books published in Scotland in the preceding half year, and of the most remarkable books published in England and elsewhere in the same period. In its anonymous pages, Robertson (afterwards principal Robertson), Adam Smith and Alexander Wedderburn (afterwards lord chancellor Loughborough) first made their appearance in print; but, notwithstanding the eminent ability of its contributors, *The Edinburgh Review* of 1755 lived through only two numbers, its liberal tone, in matters of philosophy, and in matters considered to trench on theology, proving distasteful to the prevailing narrow orthodoxy of that day[1].

[1] *The Edinburgh Review* for the year 1755, 2nd edition with preface, 1818.

The Edinburgh Review, 'to be continued quarterly,' of 1802, which was to become famous and permanent as an exponent of literary and political criticism, abandoned the idea of noticing all the productions of the press, and proposed to confine its attentions to the most important. The new journal, it was hoped, would be 'distinguished for the selection rather than for the number of its articles[1].' To three young men, then quite unknown to fame, belongs the honour of originating *The Edinburgh Review*, and of winning for it its high place in English literature, namely—Francis Jeffrey, a Scottish advocate, still almost briefless, who had been educated at the universities of Glasgow and Oxford; Sydney Smith, a distinguished Wykehamist and Oxonian, who, while waiting for an English living, was in Edinburgh as the private tutor of young Michael Hicks Beach, then attending classes in the university; and Henry Brougham, the future lord chancellor, who had only lately been called to the Scottish bar, and who, with abundant leisure, was, like Jeffrey, still treading the floor of the parliament house.

The history of the birth and early years of *The Edinburgh* is well known. Nothing of the kind, with the exception of the discouraging precedent already mentioned, had ever been attempted in Scotland. It was easy to say on the title page of the first number that it was 'to be continued quarterly'; yet, Jeffrey himself, who was to edit the *Review* for the next seven and twenty years, was full of anxiety as to whether it would pay its expenses for the one year for which he and his friends had bound themselves to the publishers. His apprehensions were quickly dispelled. By all accounts, the effect on the public mind of the appearance of the first number (10 October 1802) was 'electrical.' The little literary criticism then existing was lifeless—mere hackwork, subsidised by publishers to puff their own wares. Here was a review showing upon every page, whether the reader agreed with, or differed from, its expressions of opinion, conspicuous ability, vigour and independence. Succeeding numbers added to the popularity and the fame of *The Edinburgh.* In half-a-dozen years, its circulation rose from 800 to 9000; in ten years, it had grown to about 10,000; and, by 1818, it had attained a circulation of nearly 14,000, which was never exceeded. Even these figures do not show the number of copies ultimately bought by the public, for each volume (containing two numbers) had 'a book value'; and many volumes ran through a large number of editions. For example, in the years 1814 and 1815, there were published the tenth and seventh editions of volume I and volume II respectively.

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[1] See advertisement to the first number of *The Edinburgh Review*, October 1802.

The first number contained no fewer than 29 articles, and 252 pages. Nine articles were written by Sydney Smith, six by Jeffrey, four by Francis Horner, three by Brougham and others by Thomson, Murray and Hamilton. Some of the contributions were so short that they were rather notices of books than serious and critical reviews. During the first three years, the list of contributors was increased by the names of Walter Scott, Playfair, John Allen, George Ellis, Henry Hallam and others. Jeffrey and his friends did not long maintain their original intention of declining all remuneration for their contributions; and only the first two numbers were written without reward. As a matter of fact, Sydney Smith had edited the first number; and he quickly saw that, if permanency was sought, the *Review* would have to be conducted on business principles. Thus, he assured Constable the publisher that a payment of £200 a year to the editor and ten guineas a sheet for contributions would render him the possessor of 'the best Review in Europe.' The system of 'all gentlemen and no pay' thus quickly came to an end, for, though the publisher considered the rate of pay suggested was unprecedented, he recognised that so, too, was the success of the *Review*, and, in later days, it was very largely increased. In the twentieth century, it is not easy to understand the coyness with which, a hundred years ago, men accepted payment for literary services. Jeffrey, who became editor under the new arrangement, satisfied himself by enquiry that none of his men would reject the £10 honorarium, and, 'under the sanction of their example,' he thought he might himself accept the offered salary 'without being supposed to have suffered any degradation[1].'

The first three or four numbers indicated clearly enough the political and literary tendencies which were to characterise the *Review*. The first article of all, written by Jeffrey, reviewed a book by Mounier, late president of the French national assembly, on the causes of the revolution. Jeffrey held what were called popular principles, but he was no revolutionist, and he looked forward to the time when men on both sides would be able to take calmer views of that great convulsion than was possible to most Englishmen in 1802. Francis Horner, in later years regarded

[1] Jeffrey to Horner, May 1803.

as one of the greatest authorities on political economy, wrote on 'The Paper Credit of Great Britain,' whilst Brougham discussed 'The Crisis in the Sugar Colonies.' The literary article in the first number—on Southey's *Thalaba*—indicated the spirit of much of the future literary criticism of the *Review*. Jeffrey seems anxious to show that the stern motto of *The Edinburgh—Judex damnatur cum nocens absolvitur*—had, in the eyes of its editor, a very real meaning.

Those who look back to the earlier numbers of *The Edinburgh* will perceive, not without amusement, that nothing so greatly roused the ire of these advanced reformers in the world political as the slightest new departure from ancient ways in the world of letters. Southey, it was urged, was nothing less than 'a champion and apostle' of a new sect of poets. They were all of them

> dissenters from the established system in poetry and criticism.... Southey is the first of these brought before us for judgment, and we cannot discharge our inquisitorial office conscientiously without pronouncing a few words upon the nature and tendency of the tenets he has helped to propagate.

The *Review* protested against 'the representation of vulgar manners in vulgar language,' and would recall its generation to 'the vigilance and labour which sustained the loftiness of Milton, and gave energy and directness to the pointed and fine propriety of Pope.' The article, however, was by no means entirely condemnatory; but enough has been quoted to show that already the note of battle had been sounded in that long war with the 'lakers' whom, half a generation later, the *Review* was still denouncing as 'a puling and self-admiring race[1].'

The literary judgments of *The Edinburgh Review* have, in a large number of instances, not been confirmed by the judgment of posterity. In many other instances, on the other hand, their criticisms have been amply vindicated. Jeffrey and his friends, in short, were not infallible, though they arrogated to themselves an authority hardly less than pontifical. Still, there was always something robust and manly in the tone they adopted. They were men of the world, engaged in the active occupations of life; of wide reading, it is true, and gifted with great literary acumen; but, perhaps, with too little leisure to appreciate contemplative poetry at its true value. They were prone to despise those whom they considered mere penmen and nothing else, and they were exasperated at the notion that any small literary coterie, holding itself aloof from the active world, should lay down laws for the regulation of poetry and taste, and give itself airs of superiority even towards the great masters of the English language. In his later life, Jeffrey, in republishing a selection of his articles in the *Review*, admits that the manner in which he treated the lake poets was not such as commended itself to his matured judgment and taste. It is not likely that his famous article of 1814 on Wordsworth's *Excursion*, opening with the words, 'This will never do,' can have been altogether pleasant reading to its author in his old age. There was, however, in Wordsworth's poetry, much for which Jeffrey had always felt and expressed admiration, and he has declared[1] that, though he repented of the 'vivacities' of manner in this much censured paper, with the substance of his articles on the poetry of the lake school (taking account of both praise and censure) he had little fault to find.

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[1] Article on *Childe Harold*, December 1816.

Far the most eminent of Jeffrey's contributors was Walter Scott, for whose patronage, though he had not yet published *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, or written a page of fiction, Scottish and English publishers were eagerly striving. The first number of the second year of *The Edinburgh* contained two articles from his pen; and, before the end of 1806, he had contributed ten more. Among these were papers on Ellis's *Early English Poets*, on Godwin's *Life of Chaucer*, on Chatterton's *Works* and on Froissart's *Chronicles*. After that year, he withdrew his countenance and support from *The Edinburgh*, though, throughout his life, he remained on terms of friendship and intimacy with Jeffrey. Indeed, in 1818, he once more returned to its pages, publishing, in the June number, an elaborate review of a novel by Maturin, *Women, or Pour et Contre, a tale by the author of Bertram.*

It was impossible that hearty cooperation in what was becoming more and more an organ of political party should long continue between the whiggism of Jeffrey, Brougham and Sydney Smith, and the toryism of Walter Scott. The latter had already remonstrated with the editor on the excessive partisanship which now marked every issue of the *Review*. 'The Edinburgh,' Jeffrey had replied, 'has but two legs to stand on. Literature is one of them, but its right leg is politics.' Next to Jeffrey himself, the *Review*, from its origin for a quarter of a century onward, was mainly dependent on Sydney Smith and Henry Brougham, each of whom contributed a marvellous number of articles on a vast variety of subjects. Sydney Smith, the only Englishman among the founders of the *Review*, and famous throughout his life as the most brilliant of humourists, knew how to utilise his great gifts in the forwarding of many a good cause and serious reform. Some who delighted in the clever jesting and rollicking high spirits which distinguished him, alike in social intercourse and in the written page, failed to recognise, as did his real intimates, the thoroughness and sincerity of his character, and his genuine desire to leave the world a better place than he found it. Henry Brougham, the youngest of the three, was to become, in a few years and for a time, by dint of extraordinary energy and ability, one of the most powerful political leaders in England. His services to the *Review*, in its early days, had been quite invaluable. Hardly any public man of the nineteenth century approached more nearly to the possession of genius. But his great gifts were weighted with very serious faults of character and temper; and, as the years went on, he earned for himself universal distrust among his fellow-workers—editors of, and contributors to, *The Edinburgh*, or statesmen engaged in the wider field of British politics. It was long a tradition among *Edinburgh* reviewers that, on one occasion, a complete number of the *Review*, with its dozen or more of articles, was, from cover to cover, written by the pen of Brougham, and the story, whether true or not, is illustrative of the universality of capacity generally attributed to him.

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[1] Jeffrey's *Contributions to the Edinburgh Review*, vol. III, p. 233.

Many years afterwards, when Jeffrey had retired from *The Edinburgh*, Brougham was to make the life of his successor, Macvey Napier, burdensome by persistent efforts to run the *Review* as his own organ—to make it the instrument of his personal ambitions and interests, of his personal prejudices and dislikes. He did not recognise that times had changed, and that he, and his position in the country, had changed with them.

It was an article by Brougham that, in very early days, had brought Byron into the field with his fierce attack upon critics in general and *The Edinburgh Review* in particular. According to Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff, Brougham, in later days, confessed to the authorship of the article on *Hours of Idleness* in the January number for 1808—the moving cause of that most brilliant of satires—*English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. The poet with equal zeal scourged both his critics and his rivals—indeed, so far as criticism goes, he was as severe on contemporary poets and on 'lakers' as were *Edinburgh* reviewers themselves. Like them, also, while shaking his head over the poetry of Scott and Wordsworth and Coleridge, he was ready to bow before the poetical genius of Campbell and Rogers. It certainly is a singular circumstance that Jeffrey, by general acknowledgment, in his own day, the first of literary critics, should have made so strange a selection of the poetry which deserved to achieve immortality.

> A man must serve his time to every trade
> Save Censure—critics all are ready made.

Assuredly, the history of literature abounds with the mistakes of critics. An author, possibly a man of genius, very probably one who has toiled for years to make himself master of his subject, a man whose merits a later age will freely acknowledge, is 'brought up for judgment,' as Jeffrey would say, before some clever writer whose youth and inexperience are hidden from the author and the public by the veil of anonymity. Can hurried judgments so pronounced tend to good results as regards progress in the appreciation of literature and art? On the other hand, all criticism would be at an end if the statesman, the poet, the author, the painter were only to be 'brought up for judgment' before a wiser statesman, a truer poet, a greater author or artist than himself. The experience of the world surely goes to show that any criticism is better than none. It may be that critics are often mistaken; but, so long as criticism is honest and able and independent, it can hardly be that it will not, in the long run, serve a useful purpose in enlightening the public mind. *Edinburgh* reviewers, in Jeffrey's day, doubtless thought, in their conceit, that it was their business to 'place' contemporary authors and poets, *i.e.* to determine their claim to immortality and their order of merit for all time in the judgment of the world. And, in this, they often failed. Their true function was, however, not this; but, rather, by their ability and acumen to stir the minds of men on those multifarious subjects with which the *Review* dealt, to provoke discussion and to enlist in it the most capable men of the day. This work, the great reviews of the early nineteenth century nobly performed. Their criticisms were written for their own age, and dealt, and were intended to deal for the benefit of contemporaries, with passing subjects of interest. As Sir Leslie Stephen has rightly said, 'Criticism is a still more perishable commodity than Poetry[1].' Time, and time alone, can establish the claim of any author or of any artist to take rank among the immortals.

It was the strong distaste of a large portion of the public, not for the literary, but for the political, criticisms of *The Edinburgh*, that, in February 1809, brought a new and most powerful rival into the field. The article on 'Don Cevallos, and the French Usurpation in Spain' was written by Jeffrey himself, and it had, undoubtedly, an exasperating effect on his political opponents. Anyone who chooses to read the article today will probably wonder that this should have been so; and he will certainly not find in it any traces of the unpatriotic feeling with which the writer was charged. The expression of what were considered 'popular sentiments' in days when the French revolution was very recent history was always sure to rouse warm indignation. Lord Buchan, the eccentric elder brother of those eminent whigs Tom[1] and Harry[1] Erskine, solemnly kicked the offending number of the *Review* from his hall door into the middle of George street. More sober men, with Walter Scott at the head of them, were genuinely scandalised. It is said, moreover, that the personal hostility of Scott had been stimulated by the article, six months earlier, on *Marmion*, which was also written by Jeffrey; though it is probable that it was the poet's worshippers, resenting the disparagement of their hero, rather than the poet himself, who were offended by a review which, while criticising the poem sharply enough in parts and not always wisely, after all placed Scott on a very high pedestal among the great poets of the world.

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[1] *Half Hours in a Library*, 1909 edn, vol. II, p. 237.

The true causes that brought *The Quarterly Review* into existence are clear enough. The time had come, and the man, to challenge and dispute vigorously the domination of the great Scottish whig organ. Scott had good reason to fear that whig politics, by its instrumentality, were being disseminated in the most jealously guarded of tory preserves. 'No genteel family,' he writes to George Ellis, 'can pretend to be without the *Edinburgh Review*; because, independent of its politics, it gives the only valuable literary criticisms that can be met with.' It was, indeed, high time, in the public interest, that the arrogant dictatorship of *The Edinburgh*, on all subjects literary and political, should be disputed by some able antagonist worthy of its steel. Thus, it happened that *The Quarterly*, unlike *The Edinburgh*, was founded with a distinctly political object and by party politicians of high standing, to avert the dangers, threatened by the spread of the doctrines of whigs and reformers, to church and state. The first move had already been made by John Murray the publisher, who, in September 1807, had written to

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[1] In later days, respectively, lord chancellor and lord advocate.

Canning that the time was favourable for starting a new political organ. Canning, at that time, made no reply. Now, however, Scott made a strong appeal to Canning and George Ellis and Croker to give their direct assistance to the new venture and to gain for it the countenance and help of other party leaders in London. Scott was himself much pressed to undertake the editorship. This he declined, successfully pressing its acceptance on Gifford, who, with Canning and Ellis, at the end of the century, had been a main supporter of *The Anti-Jacobin.* 'The real reason,' wrote Scott to Gifford, in October 1808, 'for instituting the new publication is the disgusting and deleterious doctrines with which the most popular of our Reviews disgraces its pages.' But Scott, though a strong tory, could never have become a narrow or servile partisan; and he adjured the new editor to remember that they were fighting for principles they held dear, and against doctrines they disapproved; and that their ends would not be best promoted by mere political subserviency to any administration or party.

Indeed, Scott, writing to George Ellis, went so far as to say that he did not wish the projected review to be principally or exclusively political. That might even tend to defeat its purpose. What he wanted was to institute a review in London, conducted totally independent of book-selling influence, on a plan as liberal as that of *The Edinburgh*, its literature as well supported and its principles English and constitutional[1]. Scott worked assiduously to make the first number a success, writing himself four articles, making nearly a third of the whole, and recruiting to the standard of *The Quarterly*, Southey, Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Rogers, Moore and 'others whose reputations Jeffrey had murdered, and who are rising to cry woe upon him, like the ghosts in King Richard[2].' Southey, the poet laureate, was a most voluminous contributor, and Gifford suffered much from him for having to compress his essays within the necessary limits, giving, thereby, no little offence to one whom, nevertheless, he regarded as 'the sheet anchor of the *Review*.'

There could be no question from the first as to the ability of the new journal. Yet, its first number (February 1809) met no such reception as had greeted the birth of *The Edinburgh.* Its tone was literary rather than political. It contained much that was well worth reading, little to dazzle or startle the world. The publisher was not without anxiety for the future; and his editor Gifford, great as was his literary ability, was certainly one of the least businesslike and most unpunctual of men. The second number was not ready till the end of May, the third till the end of August, when it was found by Ellis (a very candid friend and supporter) to be, 'though profound, notoriously and unequivocally dull.' Murray asserted that *The Quarterly* was not yet paying its expenses; and it was not till the fourth number (which was some six weeks behind time) that an article appeared which excited general admiration, and which, in the publisher's opinion, largely increased the demand for the *Review*. This, strangely enough, was an article, and by no means a condemnatory one, on the character of Charles James Fox. Henceforward, the circulation grew steadily, and, in the years 1818 and 1819, when it appears that each of the great reviews reached its maximum circulation, *The Edinburgh* and *The Quarterly* sold almost the same number of copies, namely, 14,000.

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[1] 2 November 1808.

[2] Walter Scott to Kirkpatrick Sharpe. See *Memoir of John Murray*, vol. I, p. 104.

The editorship of Gifford lasted till 1824. During those fifteen years, he wrote few articles himself, but he dealt strenuously with the papers sent him by contributors, in the way of compression, addition and amendment, to the no small dissatisfaction of the writers. It is interesting to know that Jane Austen derived her first real encouragement as a writer of fiction from an article on *Emma* in *The Quarterly* by Walter Scott, who remarked with approval on the introduction of a new class of novel, drawing the characters and incidents from the current of ordinary life, as contrasted with the adventures and improbabilities of the old school of romance. Still more interesting is it to be told that Walter Scott himself reviewed *Tales of my Landlord* in *The Quarterly Review* for January, 1817, venturing to attribute them to the author of *Waverley* and *Guy Mannering* and *The Antiquary*! Whilst wishing their author every success, he was solemnly warned that he must correct certain very evident defects in his romances if he expected his fame as a writer of fiction to endure.

> A leading fault in these novels is the total want of interest felt by the reader in the character of the hero. Waverley, Bertram, etc., are all brethren of a family—very amiable and very insipid sort of young men.

Few critics are, in truth, so competent to discuss the merits and defects of books as the authors who produce them. Many an author has felt, when reading a criticism of his work, whether favourable or the reverse, how much more tellingly he could himself have administered the praise or the blame. The centenary number of *The Quarterly Review*—April 1909—attributes, no doubt correctly, the concluding laudatory paragraphs of this article, not to Scott himself, but to the editorial activities of Gifford.

The two great literary and critical journals had now become the recognised standard-bearers of their respective political parties. Neither entirely excluded from its pages occasional contributions from the opposite camp; but, as a general rule, writers on any subject who were in sympathy with the political objects of liberalism or conservatism rallied respectively to *The Edinburgh* or *The Quarterly Review.* As might have been expected, the recognised position that each now held and its close connection with statesmen—the responsible leaders of parties—served to strengthen strict party-ties whilst, perhaps, lessening political independence. As the years went on, the change that had come over the character of *The Edinburgh* was strongly marked. 'It is odd to hear,' wrote Walter Bagehot in 1855, 'that the Edinburgh Review was once thought an incendiary publication.' After half-a-century of existence, the belief had become general, he says jokingly, that it was written by privy councillors only[1]. It had long been engaged not only in fighting political conservatism, but in a scarcely less fierce struggle against the extreme men, as it considered those who formed the left wing of the liberal party. In its first half century, Jeffrey and Macaulay were the two men whose character was most deeply impressed both upon the political and literary habits of thought of *The Edinburgh Review.* It now stood for moderate reform: Macaulay being equally happy in pouring broadsides (1829) into the radical philosophers headed by Bentham and James Mill and their organ *The Westminster Review,* and in turning his fire, ten years later, against the obscurantist views of the ultra-tory party represented by Gladstone's book on church and state.

Contributions, of course, were always anonymous; but there was not, nor could there be, any concealment of the authorship of such papers as Macaulay, for a series of years, sent to the *Review* —essays which have taken their permanent place in English literature. In many other cases, the veil of anonymity was a thin one. In 1846, just before Lord John Russell formed his first administration, the whig orthodoxy of the *Review* was unimpeachable, as may be seen from the list of subjects and authors in the April number. It was as follows:

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[1] *Literary Studies,* Walter Bagehot, 'The First Edinburgh Reviewers.'

1. Parliament and the Courts, by Lord Denman.
2. Shakespeare in Paris, by Mrs Austin.
3. Legislation for the Working Class, by Sir George C. Lewis.
4. The Religious Movement in Germany, by Henry Rogers.
5. Lyall's Travels in North America, by Herman Merivale.
6. European and American State Confederacies, by Nassau Senior.
7. Scottish Criminal Jurisprudence, by Lord Cockburn.
8. The Political State of Prussia, by R. M. Milnes (afterwards Lord Houghton).
9. Earls Grey and Spencer, by Lord John Russell.

As regards matters of political, ecclesiastical and religious interest, the tendency of *The Edinburgh* was consistently in favour of broad and liberal views. Jeffrey and Macaulay, Thomas Arnold, Henry Rogers, Sir James Stephen and, later in the century, Arthur Stanley and Henry Reeve, were among those who, over a long course of years, represented the thoughts and sentiments of the *Review*.

Neither *The Edinburgh* nor *The Quarterly* was at any time carried on by what could be called a regular staff. Each was under the control of its editor, who selected his contributors, and made up each number as he thought best. Jeffrey and his successor Macvey Napier held the editorship of *The Edinburgh* till close upon the middle of the century; while, during the first fifty years of *The Quarterly*, Gifford and Lockhart ruled, save for the couple of years (1824—6) during which Sir J. T. Coleridge, nephew of the poet, and friend of Keble, occupied the editorial chair. It was not till October 1853 that Lockhart resigned in favour of an old contributor, Whitwell Elwin, the scholarly rector of a parish in Norfolk where he continued to reside. The hot youth of *The Quarterly* was now a thing of the past. *The Edinburgh* had ceased to be a firebrand; *Maga* had long added respectability to its other strong claims upon the public; and, under the new editorship, 'moderation' became the distinguishing mark of *The Quarterly*. Elwin was a high church rector, but a moderate one; a tory but with whiggish leanings. 'He had not a drop of party feeling in him,' he said of himself in 1854, nor any political antipathies. Literature had been through life 'his first and only love'; and many admirable essays he himself contributed to the *Review*. His taste, however, had been formed and stereotyped in his youth; and he had little appreciation for rising genius, or any inclination to welcome, or even to try to understand, modern thought.

> 'He could not read,' so *The Quarterly* centenary article tells us, 'Browning or George Eliot, and he thought little of Tennyson. Matthew Arnold, Swinburne, and Rossetti were mere names to him. He knew little and read less of modern French and German authors, and he disliked the Preraphaelite school of painting. He considered Darwinism a wild and discredited hypothesis; he believed in Paley, condemned *Ecce Homo*, and dismissed the "Higher Criticism" with scorn[1]';

but this lack of appreciation for the sentiments of his own age did not prevent his enjoying the friendship and intimacy of the principal literary and scientific men of his day.

Gifford and Lockhart had both been fighting men, who were not open to the reproach (as they would have thought it) of a deficiency of party zeal, or of lukewarmness in their political antipathies. Still, Lockhart, the editor of *The Quarterly*, was a different man from the Lockhart of the early days of *Blackwood.* The passing years and the intimate life of Abbotsford had done much to soften and widen the character of the brilliant and mischief-loving freelance of *Maga.* Andrew Lang has done good service in greatly modifying the severe estimate formed by many of his contemporaries of the character of 'The Scorpion'; and has shown that he possessed a far more generous and more genial temperament than posterity had given him credit for. In the editorial chair, he ruled as a constitutional monarch, advised by his chief ministers Croker and Southey and Barrow[2]; while Murray himself—the publisher and owner of *The Quarterly*—took no small part in the direction of its energies. Lockhart's own political instincts were far less inclined to the older toryism than were those of Southey and Croker, to whose vehemence should be mainly ascribed the violent opposition of the *Review* to catholic emancipation and reform. Doubtless, it was Lockhart's own wiser temperament that led *The Quarterly* to support the liberal conservatism of the Tamworth manifesto, and to uphold Peel till the general *bouleversement* of tory politics which followed his repeal of the corn laws.

From its very birth, John Wilson Croker, then a young member of parliament, and already a friend of Sir Arthur Wellesley, gave strenuous support to *The Quarterly*, and, by constant contributions, down to the time of the Crimean war, did much to impress upon it his own strong spirit of toryism. It may well be that he does not deserve that reputation for the worst political self-seeking which was the result of Lord Macaulay's vigorous denunciation, and of the fact that it was from Croker that Disraeli, in *Coningsby*, drew the portrait of Rigby. *The Quarterly* itself has recently defended him, and not unsuccessfully, against such an extreme charge. That he was a prejudiced, a bitter and a violent, political partisan is beyond dispute.

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[1] Centenary article, *The Quarterly Review*, July 1909.

[2] Sir John Barrow, for forty years second secretary to the admiralty. He contributed nearly 200 articles to *The Quarterly*, between 1809 and his death in 1848.

The later political developments of the two great *Reviews*, however interesting, when W. E. Gladstone was an occasional contributor to *The Edinburgh* and *The Quarterly* (his topics being by no means exclusively political), and when Lord Salisbury was lending his brilliant and polemical pen to the conservative cause in *The Quarterly*, do not concern us here, though they seem to deserve passing mention.

The birth and early growth of *The Quarterly Review* were, as we have seen, the direct result of the political animosities called forth by the reforming, and, as was then considered, the dangerous, doctrines, which, for the previous half dozen years, *The Edinburgh* had been spreading through the land. The rise of *Blackwood's Magazine* was mainly due to a quite different cause, though a conservative or tory spirit (to use the then current expression) animated its principal supporters as strongly as it did those whom Scott and Canning had summoned to the launch of *The Quarterly* on its distinguished career. Constable was the publisher, not the real founder, of *The Edinburgh*; Murray stood in the same relation to *The Quarterly*. But the new magazine which appeared in 1817 was brought into life by the energy, ability and acumen of the spirited publisher whose name it bore. In 1802, *The Edinburgh*—a new departure in this class of literature—resulted from the association, at that time, in Edinburgh, for the purpose of literary and political criticism, of a group of gifted and ardent and independent young men, none of whom was then known to fame. In 1809, its great rival, *The Quarterly*, had, in a less adventurous fashion, taken the field. It had behind it, from the beginning, the patronage and support of the leading statesmen of the prevailing political party in the state, and it was assisted by some of the most distinguished literary men of the day. Both these reviews had prospered. Their circulation was believed to be, and was, very large. The great position and prosperity of Constable, especially, known in Edinburgh as 'the Crafty,' largely due to the wonderful success of *The Edinburgh*, naturally attracted the attention of aspiring rivals in the trade. At this time, moreover, Blackwood was feeling keenly the defeat of a well-grounded hope that he had established a lasting connection with Scott by the publication of *The Black Dwarf*, which, however, after the fourth edition, had been, somewhat roughly, transferred to Constable. His feelings, as a high tory in politics, and as a rival in trade, concurred in stirring him to make a great effort to lower whig ascendency, tackle *The Edinburgh Review* and establish and promote the publishing fame of the house of Blackwood.

In Blackwood's opinion, *The Quarterly*, however sound its principles, was too ponderous and dignified and middle-aged to counteract the mischief done by the brilliant and dashing organ of Jeffrey. He was in search of something lighter—an Edinburgh magazine 'more nimble, more frequent, more familiar.' His first start was disappointing, and, by the time that the third number of his monthly had been published, its insipidity, want of spirit and lack of party zeal had determined him to place its management in new hands. He saw the necessity of making a sensation. To begin with, at all events, it would be better to startle, and even to shock, the public than merely to win its respectful applause. And the three, in their different ways very gifted men, to whom he now turned were admirably suited for his purpose—Lockhart, in later days to become famous as editor of *The Quarterly Review*, and the biographer of Scott; Wilson, afterwards professor of moral philosophy and destined to live in English literature as 'Christopher North'; and Hogg, the Ettrick shepherd. The result of their joint lucubrations was the famous 'Chaldee MS.,' which, in language parodied from Scripture, overwhelmed, with scathing satire and personal ridicule, the best known and most respected notabilities of the Scottish metropolis. Blackwood was reckoning upon the outrageousness of his new number to advertise it. And he had not reckoned in vain, for its bitter personalities and strong flavour of irreverence at once roused a storm, and offended the literary world of Edinburgh. It is surprising that the excitement should have spread far beyond the bounds of Edinburgh and Scotland, where, alone, the personal and local allusions of this famous satire could have been appreciated. Blackwood and his friends had, in their immediate object, succeeded magnificently, for the October number had made *Maga*, as its supporters loved to call it, famous throughout the land.

Still, notoriety and fame, thus achieved, brought down upon the heads of Blackwood and his coadjutors no little trouble.

Libel actions and challenges to mortal combat filled the air. No one would own to being responsible editor; and, as to 'the Chaldee MS.,' it would seem to have slipped in almost unawares, if we can believe the account which Blackwood gave to those who threatened him. After a large number of copies had been sold, the magazine was suppressed, and future copies were published without the famous paper. In the eyes of readers of a century later, there are two articles in the same number that deserve even more serious condemnation: namely, the violent attack on Coleridge and his *Biographia Literaria*, written by Wilson, and the still more virulent attack on Leigh Hunt and the Cockney school of poetry, written by Lockhart. With *Blackwood's Magazine*, hatred of 'the school,' giving it an extended signification, became an obsession. Leigh Hunt, editor of the radical *Examiner*, was, doubtless, a red rag to the young tory writers of *Maga*; but they must have been blind indeed when they threatened with their wrath the 'minor adherents' of the school—'the Shelleys, the Keats's and the Webbes.'

The only excuse Lockhart could make for himself in later years was his extreme youth at the time when he first entered the service of *Maga*. He had fallen under the influence of Wilson—a dozen years his senior—whose enthusiastic temperament and social charm, united with literary ability of a very high order, had, from the beginning, greatly impressed him. Lockhart consoled himself with the reflection that, in all probability, the reckless violence and personalities of his friend and himself had done no harm to anyone but themselves. The *Magazine* was sowing its wild oats, and it was some time before Blackwood and his merry men exerted themselves to acquire for it a respected and responsible character. Lockhart's best friends, including Walter Scott, regretted his close connection with what seemed to them to be a species of literary rowdyism; but Lockhart, though age moderated and softened him, ever remained unshaken in his allegiance to *Maga*.

In 1819, the indefatigable publisher found another recruit for his turbulent monthly, in some ways no less remarkable than Lockhart and Wilson—the Irishman Maginn. A more brilliant trio of singular individualities have seldom been united in literary enterprise. Lockhart, a son of the manse, had won distinction in scholarship at the universities of Glasgow and Oxford. A born linguist, he had betaken himself to the study of German and Spanish literature. He had made the acquaintance of Goethe at Weimar, and, on his return home, he must at once have found a position in the best literary circles of Edinburgh. Though he was called to the bar, it was soon evident that his activities would find their development rather in the pursuit of literature than in the practice of the law. Lockhart was exceedingly clever with his pencil as well as with his pen ; and, in the exercise of both, he gave not a little amusement and offence to the good people of Edinburgh by the pungency of his clever caricatures and vivid word-sketches, which form part of *Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk*, published in 1819.

Wilson was a man of means, who, like Lockhart, had received his education at the universities of Glasgow and Oxford, and, in both, had won distinction as a scholar. As gentleman-commoner of Magdalen, he had, moreover, achieved fame among undergraduates as an athlete of great prowess, and some of his feats of strength and agility, especially a long-jump in Christchurch meadows, were long remembered. On leaving Oxford, he had bought the property of Elleray on lake Windermere, where he had soon become intimate with his poetical neighbours, Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey; but the sudden loss of a large portion of his fortune compelled him to abandon the life of a country gentleman, and to seek remunerative employment in Edinburgh. His poems, *The Isle of Palms* and *The City of the Plague*, had already made him known there. Jeffrey was ready to welcome him, and, in 1818, inserted in *The Edinburgh* a very able article from his pen on the fourth canto of *Childe Harold*. But political differences in those days counted for much, and the energies of Wilson, withdrawn from *The Edinburgh*, were quickly absorbed in fighting the battles of toryism and *Maga*. The Edinburgh town council elected him in 1819 to the chair of moral philosophy in the university, over Sir William Hamilton—a startling and even outrageous proceeding, only, of course, to be accounted for by the fact that the party preferences of the town councillors dictated the selection. Nevertheless, Wilson was to prove a very good and stimulating professor.

Lockhart and Wilson were now fast friends, differing greatly in personal characteristics, but alike in their recklessness and in the violence of their language and in the mischievous delight with which they assailed their foes and provoked commotion: Lockhart, 'the Scorpion which delighted to sting the faces of men,' Wilson, overflowing with boisterous animal spirits, warmhearted and generous, but heedless as to the strength of his blows, or as to restraining the violent outpouring of his feelings.

To these two Scotsmen—'the Great Twin Brethren,' as they are admiringly called in *Annals of a Publishing House* (Blackwood)—there was added a typical Irishman, the brilliant, rollicking, reckless Maginn, once a schoolmaster in Cork, a man of wit and learning, to whom Trinity college, Dublin, had given an honorary degree. Taken into the utmost confidence by the inner circle of *Maga*, Maginn, before long, was contributing a large portion of its articles and almost all its verse ; and he did it a yet greater service, if it is true that the suggestion of the famous *Noctes Ambrosianae* came from him. It was from Maginn that Thackeray drew the portrait of captain Shandon in *Pendennis*. Garnett has described him as

> a man of undoubtedly extraordinary faculties. They were those of an accomplished scholar grafted on a brilliant *improvisatore*—the compound constituting a perfectly ideal magazinist.

But, with all his endowments, his faults and failings were many. In 1830, he did good work in founding *Fraser's Magazine* (on the same lines as *Blackwood*), which, with the cooperation of such men as Coleridge and Thackeray and Carlyle, was for years to stand in the front rank of the monthlies. His connection with the newspaper press, however, tended to become less reputable, and his intemperate habits hastened the way downhill of a man who had many admirers, and no enemy but himself.

The Blackwood group, however much their behaviour may have occasionally shocked public sensibilities, contained men of very remarkable genius. Through Wilson, De Quincey, now settled in Edinburgh, obtained his introduction to Blackwood, and it was as early as 7 January 1821 that he described himself, in a letter to the startled editor, as 'the Atlas of the Magazine,' who could alone 'save it from the fate which its stupidity deserved!' Coleridge, also an occasional contributor, was full of advice as to its proper management. Lockhart, Hogg, Wilson, De Quincey, Maginn would have been an awkward team for an editor or publisher of less commanding qualities than Blackwood to control. *Noctes Ambrosianae* added for many years greatly to the fame and popularity of *Maga*. Striking out a new line, these papers reported imaginary dialogues and conversations on questions and events of the day, on remarkable books and the characters of public men, carried on, at social gatherings and suppers at Ambrose's, with all the freedom of familiar intercourse between intimate friends. They were, to begin with, the composition of several authors, of Lockhart or Hogg, of Wilson or Maginn ; but, after two or three years, they became almost wholly the work of Wilson. Beginning in 1822, they continued till 1835, and number 71 papers. Of these, 41, Wilson's own composition, have been included in his collected works, edited by Ferrier, of which they form the first four volumes. The characters who occupy the stage are Christopher North (Wilson himself), Hogg, the Ettrick shepherd, Timothy Tickler, more or less an impersonation of a maternal uncle of Wilson, and, in a few papers, De Quincey—'the English Opium Eater,' and O'Doherty, representing Maginn. Sometimes, personages wholly fictitious are introduced, while, sometimes, real persons, without any consent of their own, are pressed into the service at the good pleasure of *Maga.* The inimitable wit and humour of these discussions, the freshness of thought and criticism, and the racy language of the talkers, have given *Noctes* a place in English literature. The impersonation of Hogg, in particular, is a realistic triumph, and in that vivid portraiture the Ettrick shepherd will live hardly less than in the records of his actual life and work.

Another periodical of 'the nimbler and more familiar' kind came to life very soon after the start of *Blackwood*, and very warm grew the rivalry between the northern and the southern monthly. *The London Magazine* (1820—9) had a short but very distinguished career, during which it introduced to its readers the works of men who were to take a very high place in British literature. Leigh Hunt and Lamb and Hazlitt were, in a special degree, selected for denunciation by *Maga* and the hostile critics of the northern metropolis, as representative of what they, with lofty superiority, denominated 'the Cockney school.' In September 1821 appeared the first instalment of De Quincey's *Confessions of an Opium Eater*, which stimulated public curiosity, and which, as time went on, attracted a vast multitude of readers. In the September following was published that *Dissertation on Roast Pig* which ever since has been one of the most widely appreciated and frequently quoted of all the *Essays of Elia.* Keats, shortly before his death, published two poems in *The London*; but, neither in its poetry nor in its prose, could 'the Mohock Magazine' (for so the cockneys had nicknamed *Maga*) find anything in *The London* to mitigate the violence of its hostility.

Maga was but slightly the senior of the conflicting magazines, *The London's* first number having appeared only a couple of years after 'the Chaldee MS.' had rendered *Blackwood* famous. As regards recourse to personalities and insults, there was little to choose between them. Literary criticism on either side became submerged in torrents of personal abuse; and, in accordance with the fashion of that day, it very soon became necessary for Lockhart and John Scott (the first editor of *The London*) to seek satisfaction by meeting each other 'on the sod.' A duel between them having, at the last moment, been averted by a clumsily managed and misapprehended arrangement, Lockhart returned to Scotland, only to hear from his friend and second, Christie, that he had himself felt bound to engage Scott in deadly combat at Chalk farm, and had left him mortally wounded on the field of battle.

These unhappy events produced a great effect upon Lockhart, whom his wisest and truest friends, Walter Scott, Christie and others had in vain attempted to withdraw from intimate association with Mohock methods. Jeffrey, indeed, had felt himself compelled unwillingly to drop all connection with *Maga's* contributors. Political differences may, perhaps, have counted for something in bringing him to that determination; but that Murray, who was in strong political sympathy, and had, with Blackwood himself, a direct interest in the publication, should have withdrawn all countenance from it, and that Walter Scott should have remonstrated, indicate that, quite irrespective of party leanings, violence and personality had exceeded even the wide limits which the public sentiment of the day permitted.

When, in 1821, Thomas Campbell undertook the editorship of Colburn's *New Monthly Magazine*, he declared in his preface that its main object would be literary, not political. It reported the news of the day, furnished a chronicle and register of events and contained valuable original papers, prose and poetry, covering a vast variety of subjects. Campbell's own *Lectures on Poetry*, and several of his most admired poems, such as *The Last Man*, first appeared in its pages. It was a miscellany, not a review or a critical journal at all; and, though he obtained the services of some distinguished men as contributors, Campbell's editorship, which lasted nine years, was hardly successful. And now a new era was opening for the monthlies, when the greatest masters of English fiction were to turn to them as providing the readiest access to the public ear, and when, for a magazine, there would be no such 'sheet anchor' as a great novelist.

No one can take a broad survey of the work accomplished by the English reviews and magazines that came into existence in the earlier part of the nineteenth century, and by their successors, without being impressed by the immense service they have rendered to English literature, both by direct contribution, and by the support they have given (often essential support) to men in their younger days, who were to achieve future literary eminence. At the same time, it is difficult not to be struck by the strange fatality under which their criticism, in very conspicuous instances, went hopelessly astray. Especially in the hostile reception given to new poetical works of real genius, the leaders of English criticism appear, to the eyes of a later generation, to have been singularly blind. We have already noticed the attitude assumed by *The Edinburgh* towards Wordsworth and the 'lakers.' *The Quarterly*, in 1818, showed as little discrimination, in that well-known article by the redoubtable Croker which has been popularly, but erroneously, made responsible for the death of Keats. In its centenary number, *The Quarterly* justly observed that a worse choice could not have been made than that of Croker for discussing the merits or demerits of 'the poet's poet'; since, though some poetry may have been within his range, and though he admired Scott and Byron, 'Croker was a thoroughly unpoetical person.' This is true; but, if an explanation, it is certainly no excuse for the choice. Inasmuch as Lockhart saw in Keats merely 'a cockney follower' of Leigh Hunt, and as Shelley, at this period, seems almost to have shared Lockhart's sentiments, it seems safer to fall back upon Andrew Lang's comment:

> Shelley's letter to Leigh Hunt, with Lockhart's *obiter dicta*, prove that poet and writer alike may fail fully to know contemporary genius when they meet it, and may as in Shelley's preference for Leigh Hunt to Keats prefer contemporary mediocrity[1].

It is not given to all men—even to all editors—to recognise 'genius when they meet it.' On the other hand, editors and critics have very often discovered, and enabled to win fame, quite unknown men, possessed, as the world in later days has recognised, of real ability, men who, but for them, might have had great difficulty in emerging from obscurity at all. Moreover, the editor of a periodical has often a difficult task in building up, out of varied and excellent material, a complete and effective whole. It is not surprising that the relations between Carlyle and his editors were, notwithstanding his indisputable genius, sometimes strained. He could not stand 'editorial hacking and hewing,' he wrote to Macvey Napier of *The Edinburgh*, for, surely, he, of all men, might be trusted to write quietly, without hysterical vehemence, as one who not merely supposed but knew. Lockhart, of *The Quarterly*, was compelled to decline an article from Carlyle on chartism, partly, because he stood in awe of his powerful lieutenant, Croker, and, partly, because the article almost assumed the dimensions of a book. In the years 1833 and 1834, *Sartor Resartus* was appearing in *Fraser*; but the editor was hurrying it to a close, finding that it did not meet the taste of his readers.

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[1] See Andrew Lang's *Life of Lockhart*, vol. I.

A century and more has passed since Walter Scott declared there was no literary criticism to be found outside *The Edinburgh*. In quantity, at all events, the deficiency was soon supplied; and quarterlies and monthlies and weekly and daily newspapers poured out a never ceasing flood of comment on almost every publication that saw the light. Reviews and magazines soon outgrew the extravagance of their stormy youth, and the excessive violence of language and the gross personalities once in fashion passed away almost as completely as the habit of duelling. The meeting between Jeffrey and Moore, and the more tragical encounter between Christie and Scott, brought credit to no one. Personal animosity and private dislike continued occasionally to colour criticism and to make it more scathing and pungent, as when Macaulay and Croker, in their respective organs, 'dusted each other's jackets'; but, differences between men of the pen were now left to the pen to settle; so, even the courts of law ceased to be invoked in their quarrels. The extraordinary development of periodical literature, as of journalism, in recent times, has greatly changed the character of literary criticism and the public to which it appealed—so much so that it is difficult for us, nowadays, to understand the thrill of emotion with which the first number of *The Edinburgh* was received, or the violent excitement created throughout the country by the extravagancies and absurdities of 'the Chaldee MS.'

Yet, the great services rendered, in the early years of the nineteenth century, by the pioneers of the new advance of periodical literature in this country, and of independent criticism in many fields, in that of literature more especially, will, nevertheless, remain unforgotten.

CHAPTER VII

HAZLITT

Of the group of romantic writers whose work appeared chiefly in the magazines of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, no one led an existence more detached than William Hazlitt. By temperament, he loved isolation, delighting to go alone on his walks into the country so that he might turn over in his mind some favourite abstract proposition and try to analyse, for his own gratification, some peculiar phase of human nature. In thinking upon political affairs he had assumed a position at variance with that held by most contemporary Englishmen. 'He wilfully placed himself,' writes De Quincey, 'in collision with all the interests that were in the sunshine of this world and with all the persons that were then powerful in England.' That he was not popular did not, however, make him, like Swift, a cynic. He had no high social ambitions which could not be realised. No man was ever more free from the desire of political preferment. Apparently, his highest aim was to write in a manner that would satisfy himself. Disappointment came to him when he saw others treat lightly convictions to which he clung with desperate earnestness. He was embittered when he discovered a friend wavering in his loyalty to a cherished ideal or when some one spoke with derision of his idols, especially of Rousseau, Napoleon, or the principles of the French revolution. With almost everybody worth knowing in London he became acquainted, but he quarrelled with all, so that when he died, in 1830, only Charles Lamb stood at his bedside. If we really learn to understand this isolated temperament, we shall find an admirable strain of courage and honesty, a conspicuous lack of double-dealing in a time when it might have been of temporary advantage for him to have trimmed his sails to the varying winds. No less a man than Charles Lamb discovered the real heart; for he wrote to Southey :

> I should belie my own conscience if I said less than that I think W. H. to be in his natural and healthy state one of the wisest and finest spirits

breathing. So far from being ashamed of that intimacy which was betwixt us, it is my boast that I was able for so many years to have preserved it entire, and I think I shall go to my grave without finding, or expecting to find, such another companion.

Some light may be thrown upon Hazlitt's temperament and upon his antagonistic attitude toward the prevailing opinions of his day by a recital of some of the incidents of his life. From his forbears, he inherited traditions of dissent. His paternal ancestors had come originally from Holland to Ireland. There, the elder William Hazlitt was born and grew to be a man of strong character, destined to impress those with whom he associated. He received the master's degree from the university of Glasgow, where he established for himself a reputation for liberal views on religion and politics. He married the daughter of a nonconformist ironmonger and began his career as a unitarian minister. Wherever his profession took him, he attracted men of such intellectual ability as Priestley and Benjamin Franklin and achieved more than local fame on account of his powers of discussion. At Maidstone, William Hazlitt, the future essayist, was born on 10 April 1778. From Maidstone, the family moved to Bandon, county Cork, Ireland, where the father aroused the suspicions of the townspeople by an apparently too great devotion to the cause of the American soldiers in Kinsale prison. Recognising his increasing unpopularity, he decided to try his fortunes in America. Like many a radical of his day, he believed that there his ideals of liberty would become a reality. His three years in America present shifting scenes ending in disappointment and a determination that his family should return to England. In the following winter (1787—8), the father was called to the little church at Wem, near Shrewsbury. For more than a quarter of a century, the Hazlitts lived in this remote village. Most of the years between the age of ten and twenty-two, young William spent at Wem. So far, there is little indication of what the future had in keeping for the son of the poor, obscure, dissenting minister. The diary written by his sister Margaret in America attests his delight in the long walks across country with his father in Massachusetts. Numerous references in his essays describe with enthusiasm the pleasure which he found in walking with his father in the country about Wem and in talking on metaphysical subjects.

The other influence which seems with increasing years to have grown into a passion is the impression of nature upon him. His eye was ever turned out of the window. In his own garden at Wem, he watched with a sympathy akin to Thoreau's 'the broccoli plants and kidney beans of his own rearing.' His tramps led him into all parts of Shropshire, to Peterborough, and into Wales. Nature was 'company enough' for him. Although he afterwards wrote much and well about books, he always associated everything with outdoor life—books which he had read, churches or pictures which he had seen, people whom he had met. Even the battles of Napoleon had such associations:

> On the same day the news of the battle of Austerlitz came; I walked out in the afternoon and, as I returned, saw the evening star set over a poor man's cottage with other thoughts and feelings than I shall ever have again.

He struggled long and hard to find himself and his place in the world. When he was fifteen, he was sent by his father to the nonconformist theological seminary at Hackney. There, he found a deal of metaphysics to his liking, and, also, soon discovered that the ministry was not to be his calling. Fortunately for him, his brother John was a portrait-painter in London working under the direction of Sir Joshua Reynolds. To his brother's studio, William made frequent visits and became enamoured of the profession of painting. He was more than ever in doubt what to do. After an unsuccessful year at school, he returned to Wem. He could not preach, he would like to paint, he wished to write but could not. 'I was at that time dumb, inarticulate, helpless like a worm by the wayside.' One day, in 1796, he found a copy of Burke's *Letter to a Noble Lord.* For the first time, he felt what it must be to write, 'to be able to convey the slightest conception of my meaning to others in words.' Then, a new light shone into his soul. He met Coleridge, heard him preach, walked and talked with him and was invited to visit him at Nether Stowey and to meet Wordsworth. What this meant for Hazlitt he has described, with the charm of a poet, in *My First Acquaintance with Poets,* one of the finest essays in the language. As if from a dream, the young man of twenty arose with a resolution that the greatest discouragements could not shake off. Not quite ready to give up painting, he spent a little while with his brother in London. He crossed to the Louvre, where, for several months, he made copies of the masters for friends at home and actually went about in northern England painting portraits of his father, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Lamb and others. Then, his career as a painter came abruptly to a close. Nothing remained for him but to write.

Like the careers of the other romantic essayists of the period, Hazlitt's life presents nothing of thrilling interest. We know little about it, aside from references in his essays, in the interesting diary of Crabb Robinson and in the letters of Charles and Mary Lanb. He became a friend of the most notable people in London; above all, he was always welcome at the rooms of the Lambs. He has left us the best description of one of their Wednesday evenings. Unfortunately, he came to know a certain Sarah Stoddart, a friend of Mary Lamb. After an unromantic courtship, they were married in 1808, with Charles Lamb as one of the four witnesses. Charles wrote ominously to Southey, 'I was at Hazlitt's marriage and had like to have been turned out several times during the ceremony. Anything awful makes me laugh.' After the wedding, the Hazlitts moved to Sarah's cottage at Winterslow, a little village about six miles from Salisbury. For about three years they lived at Winterslow, and afterwards, for brief periods, Hazlitt repaired thither to obtain some of the seclusion which contributed largely to his best writing. To neither of the two persons was the union agreeable, and they planned to go together to Scotland to obtain a divorce. A second marriage, with a Mrs Bridgewater, proved a mere episode in his life and seemed to confirm the opinion held by his friends that at least Hazlitt's temper was not conducive to a life of marital happiness.

Twenty-five years were allotted to Hazlitt for his life-work. In that short span, he succeeded in making his way to fame from absolute obscurity, without the prestige of family or wealth, with no formal education and no friends of influence. This he achieved at a time when there were many men of Titanic mould. He won distinction as a lecturer; his criticisms on books, pictures and plays were widely read; he became known as one of the best talkers and he was the target of the invectives of some of the cleverest, as well as the most brutal, of the reviewers in the leading magazines.

The writings of Hazlitt have recently been collected by A. R. Waller and Arnold Glover and published in twelve large, closely printed volumes, in all about six thousand pages. Not many of us would wish to read all these pages. Some of his writing is forced and superficial, notably his essays on philosophy; some is unpleasant, for example, the sentimental record of his passion for the stupid servant girl in *Liber Amoris*; some is bitter and full of prejudice; but, withal, there is much, very much, that is fine, so fine that William Ernest Henley only yesterday could say, 'Hazlitt is ever Hazlitt; and at his highest moments Hazlitt is hard to beat, and has not these many years been beaten.'

In whatever he did he was an enthusiast. The same gusto which, as a boy, he had shown in his discussions with his father, he displayed in his reading of philosophy and in his first attempt (*Essay on the Principles of Human Action*, 1805) to elucidate the systems of Hartley and Helvetius. He liked to cherish his experiences: books that he had read, plays which he had seen, pictures that he had admired. He liked to discuss abstract propositions while he walked alone in the country, trying to 'forget the town and all that is in it.' He liked to tell what he liked and, above everything, he liked to try to say things in his own way. And he succeeded so well that Stevenson, who admired him ungrudgingly, once said of him, 'We are all mighty fine fellows, but none of us can write like Hazlitt.' Certainly, it was, for him, better 'to travel than to arrive'; else, it would be difficult to understand how a man so widely hated, so bitterly attacked, so much alone, could say on his death-bed: 'Well, I have had a happy life.'

The subjects of his lectures or essays on authors and their works include almost every name worth knowing in English literature from Chaucer to Hazlitt's own day—men of varied literary attainment of the Elizabethan era, wits of the restoration, comic writers, dramatists, poets, novelists of the eighteenth century and almost all his contemporaries.

When we consider that he did not have the guides and handbooks of today which tell us dogmatically what to like and how to appreciate the masterpieces of English literature, we get a better understanding of the range and variety of these criticisms. He had had almost no formal training, he knew little of ancient classical literature in the original languages; but, somehow, in his goings to and fro, he had laid hold of some of the great books of the world and he had read them well: perhaps he knew Shakespeare best, Montaigne was his model essayist and he knew something of Le Sage, Rabelais, Rousseau, Boccaccio, Cervantes, Goethe and Schiller. Among English writers, his favourites were Spenser, Milton, Congreve, Swift, Arbuthnot, Burke, Fielding, Richardson and Scott.

If his preparation for the task of a literary critic seems not what we should expect today, certainly we are surprised how well he succeeded in appraising the best English literature. Perhaps his greatest service to his time was the attention which he directed to Shakespeare. Chagrined by the lack of intelligent English criticism of Shakespeare, he praised without reserve A. W. Schlegel for his sympathetic interpretation and set to work to discuss each play with a gusto that has never been excelled. Heine stated that, up to his time, Hazlitt's was the best comment on Shakespeare. Perhaps his criticism lacked the profoundness and philosophical insight of Coleridge and the affectionate appreciation of Lamb, but it is more inclusive than either. For the reader of today who wishes to read the plays of Shakespeare with unadulterated enjoyment, not deviating into dogmatic assertion or scientific research, Hazlitt is a sure guide. His series of comments on Shakespeare's plays and characters is a challenge to the reader to turn again to the scenes where he will find something new in an old familiar passage. We can be certain that Hazlitt has not led us into a waste of philological or philosophical speculation. He does not put himself between Shakespeare and ourselves but helps us to know Shakespeare better as a poet and as a dramatist who saw life from many angles.

Likewise, the other dramatists of Shakespeare's day and writers of prose receive most intelligent appreciation. Perhaps the best of his critical work is the clear and discriminating interpretation of the spirit of the Elizabethan age. Sifting the gold from the dross, he sets in proper place the men and forces which made the era great. In his discussion of seventeenth century writers, he sounds surprisingly modern. His regard for Milton, Bunyan, Sir Thomas Browne and Jeremy Taylor does not show the same degree of devotion as does Lamb's quaint imitation of them, but his judgment of their work as literature is certainly more to be trusted by the reader who desires to view English literature in its true perspective. Like many of his successors, Hazlitt found the eighteenth century interesting in its virility, and his preferences are amazingly supported by the best judgment of today. He appreciated intelligently the forceful simplicity of eighteenth century style and inherited the best qualities of that style. He displayed genius in his ability to discern what was real beneath the formality and affectation of eighteenth century manners. His criticism of Pope, whom most of his contemporaries did not understand, shows with what intelligence he recognised Pope as the poet of art in contrast with Shakespeare the poet of nature. He extolled the eloquence of Burke and urged repeatedly that here was the finest model for the expression, in prose, of imaginative feeling.

Hazlitt's criticism of his contemporaries in *The Spirit of the Age* is in accord with his courageous position on all questions. That he should sit in judgment on his own friends seemed to him as natural as that he should speak out what he thought of writers long since dead. It was inevitable that the personal estimate should play a part here; but it is remarkable how a full century accepts his verdict. To be sure, there are bits of ill-temper and personal prejudice, but there is so much which is sound and genuine that it is safe to say that these essays are almost the last of Hazlitt's writings which the student of English literature would surrender. The particular essays show the fighting qualities of a man who was animated with fiery courage, whom Gifford and the whole pack of hostile reviewers found a most worthy antagonist. What he thought most worthy we still admire, Coleridge, Cobbett, Scott, 'the greatest and wisest' of the novelists, Wordsworth, 'the most original poet now living.' We do not hate all that he hated, but what he loved we find is most deserving of our love.

To his envious contemporaries, who taunted him with a lack of reading which, they affirmed, was displayed by the frequent recurrence of the same quotation in his essays, he said,

> I have been found fault with for repeating myself and for a narrow range of ideas. To a want of general reading I plead guilty and am sorry for it but perhaps if I had read more I might have thought less.

Perhaps that was an easy way to excuse himself; but it is true that he tried most earnestly to cultivate the habit of thinking, and detested nothing so much as servile imitation. He wished to think and feel for himself. If he did not drink deep, he was an expert taster. He wrote as he would have talked, guided by an unusually catholic sympathy. No one literary form or period, author or group of writers blinded him to the enjoyment of the long sweep of varied literary expression. He had not sworn allegiance to any school. Without historical or scientific equipment, he was possessed of a rare faculty for describing a literary movement and putting his finger on the central and impelling force. For the mere dates of an author's life or mere linguistic details, he had little interest. His enjoyment of *Hamlet, Lear, Othello,* was not affected by any questions of textual uncertainty or priority of composition. To him, it was sufficient that here was poetry of a high order, that here was something that made him glad to be alive.

An important contribution of Hazlitt is his comment on the stage, largely included in *A Review of the English Stage; or, A Series of Dramatic Criticisms* (1818, 1821). His first continuous employment was on *The Morning Chronicle*, in 1813, for which he wrote his first dramatic criticism, and, save for a few unimportant things by Leigh Hunt, the first of its kind in our literature. Later, he wrote for *The Examiner*, *The Champion*, *The Times* and, finally, *The London Magazine*. These hundred or more of articles include much interesting discussion of the theatres, plays and actors of his time. His visits took him to Drury lane, Covent garden, The Haymarket, The Lyceum, The King's, Surrey, The Adelphi, The Coburg, The Aquatic and The East London. He wrote of all the plays of Shakespeare, of those of the restoration and the eighteenth century which were still given and of the first performances of plays of his own time. He described winter and summer plays, pantomimes, operas and oratorios. He has left the best account of the actors and actresses whom he saw, the Kembles, Kean, Macready, Booth, Bannister, Miss Stephens, Mrs Siddons, as well as sketches of others of whom we now know only the names. As with his appreciation of literature, Hazlitt was not a formal critic of the drama and theatre. His taste was formed under the direction of his feelings. He wrote of the drama with gusto, not because it was a great literary form made illustrious by Shakespeare, possessed of formal technique and of a brilliant history, but because he *liked* to go to the play to see 'the happy faces in the pit,' to watch the actors in their parts and then, enriched by the happy experiences of the evening, to go home to think it all over. 'We like the stage because we like to talk about ourselves.' 'We do not like any person or persons who do not like plays.' His criticism is the vivid record of these impressions. He watched closely the entrances and exits of the actors, their eyes, faces, hands, listened to the cadences of the spoken sentences, and marked the differences in an actor on successive evenings. Rarely did he analyse a play as a formal composition, nor was he much interested in the technique of the verse. The fine speeches held him and the varying gales of passion, as they sweep the characters into this or that extremity. A drama was something to be played, and his comments took the form of personal descriptions of Kemble as Sir Giles Overreach, Miss O'Neill as Lady Teazle, Mrs Siddons as Lady Macbeth, Macready as Othello, or Kean as Iago, Shylock or Richard III.

In this field, he was a pioneer and his writings mark an epoch in the history of theatrical criticism. Before his day, honest reviews of plays were unknown. Leigh Hunt had seen the opportunity and had introduced the new department in *The Examiner*, but his imprisonment and that of his brother on account of libellous publications had prevented the continuance of this phase of their work. Not only was Hazlitt the first to give attention to dramatic criticism, but he was, also, without special training for this form of writing. He had always liked to go to the play and, in the years of his closest intimacy with Charles Lamb, had spent many evenings in the different London theatres. His fondness for the theatre and his natural zest in human action were a sufficient preparation for him in any work which required the power of observation and of vivid description. As a critic of the stage, he conceived it to be his duty to be fair to the actor and to the public. We doubt if he allowed himself to express an opinion which he did not sincerely hold, or indulge in praise or blame which he thought not deserved.

> Though I do not repent of what I have said in praise of certain actors, yet I wish I could retract what I had been obliged to say in reprobation of actors.... I never understood that the applauded actor thought himself personally obliged to the newspaper critic; the latter was merely supposed to do his duty.

As a boy and as a young man, Hazlitt loved pictures. To him, they were the reflection of what was beautiful in nature. It will be remembered that he tried to become a painter and turned aside from that profession only when he recognised that he could not be equal to any one of his ideal painters, Claude, Rembrandt, Titian or Raphael. He wrote once, 'I am a slave to the picturesque,' and so he was. In the face of nature, he saw the charm of line and colour, and his essays abound in passages that could only have been written by one who was sensitive to those effects of landscape which the painter sees. Doubtless, he had some skill of hand, for his brother and friends encouraged him to become a painter, but he felt that, in this work, he could not succeed, and, therefore, would not try. Happily for English literature, however, he knew much about painting from his conversations with Flaxman, Haydon and Northcote and his reading of Sir Joshua Reynolds and Jonathan Richardson, and, equipped with this knowledge, he turned from painting to writing about pictures.

It is safe to say that no essayist, contemporary with him, was his equal in natural aptitude or in knowledge of what the painter was trying to achieve, although he never really fashioned his ideas into a system. As in his other criticism, he was an enthusiast depending upon the turn taken by his personal impressions. One requirement only he insisted upon: that 'art must be true to nature.' By this, he meant no mere photographic reproduction, but an interpretation of nature by the artist, expressed in such a way that the picture conveyed a meaning. So, he never thought of praising mere technical excellence. The canvasses of his beloved Claude, Titian, Rembrandt were more than mere delineations, they were allied to poetry, each expressing, in its own beautiful form, the meaning of life, an emanation of the moral and intellectual part of our nature, as well as of the sensitive.

In his appreciation of painting, he tried, above everything else, to be honest with himself. He did not lack the courage to say what he honestly felt or saw. Before Ruskin was born, he wrote: 'In landscape Turner has shown a knowledge of the effects of air and of powerful relief in objects which was never surpassed.' He was not less ready to praise rising young artists, such as Haydon and Wilson, than he was to join in the universal approbation of such masters as Claude, Poussin, Rembrandt or Titian. And he would as readily indicate what he regarded as faults in the masters as praise the excellence of artists hitherto unknown. If he got no further than an expression of his feelings, at any rate he said what he liked, not because it was the fashion to like a certain picture or because he found it starred in a guide-book, but because he liked it.

> My taste in pictures is, I believe, very different from that of rich and princely collectors.... I should like to have a few pictures hung round the room that speak to me with well-known looks, that touch some string of memory, not a number of varnished, smooth, glittering gew-gaws.

Like some other writers of the romantic period, he contributed little or nothing to a philosophical discussion of the arts. Ever since the wonderful day when he acted as guide to Charles and Mary Lamb through the gallery of Blenheim, he has been an inspiration to the layman who has wished to cultivate a liking for good pictures. At a time when few people were allowed to see famous paintings in English galleries, Hazlitt described these pictures for his readers vividly and rapturously, before Ruskin's sympathetic criticism, with its imaginative descriptions of pictures and buildings, made people see more in the world that lay about them. That his work had a serious result is attested by Gosse, who, in the introduction to his edition of Hazlitt's *Conversations of James Northcote*, says: 'he claimed for painting the identity of a branch of literature and expended on it the wealth of his ever-fervid and impassioned imagination.'

For the majority of readers, the most interesting part of Hazlitt's work is to be found in his miscellaneous essays. Like his most worthy contemporaries, Lamb, De Quincey, Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley, he set forth his personal experiences and his personal prejudices. Here, then, we come nearest to the real man Hazlitt. To repeat the lines which he frequently quoted, he liked

> To pour out all as plain
> As downright Shippen or as old Montaigne.

The best of Hazlitt, then, is to be found in such essays as *My First Acquaintance with Poets, On Going a Journey, The Feeling of Immortality in Youth, On Reading Old Books, On Reading New Books, Of Persons One Would Wish to have Seen, On the Fear of Death, On Disagreeable People, On Taste, On Familiar Style, The Sick Chamber, The Fight.* After everything has been sifted, Hazlitt is to be judged by these essays, and, doubtless, he would be willing to have it so.

On one occasion, he wrote, 'I have not written a line that licks the dust.' Incidents of his early life had kept burning the fires of independence and courageous expression. Born in a family known for its hearty acceptance of the views of dissent, he had grown up in close association with his father, with whom he enjoyed discussion upon the most abstract subjects. To the ideals of his youth he had clung tenaciously and he had shunned the appearance of deserting the cause of republicanism or liberty in any form. His first published composition was a letter to *The Shrewsbury Chronicle* (1791), in which he stood out for fair treatment of Priestley, whose house had been burned by a mob in Birmingham. He did not follow the judgments of English critics, neither was he held in thrall by the thought of Germany or France. He wished to see and feel things for himself. This spirit of independence, sometimes blinded by ill-temper or bitter resentment, was always asserting itself, whether in championing the cause of a new actor, in praising an aspiring young painter, in giving a new turn to an old definition or in holding at bay the pack of reviewers whose numbers made them bold to attack a superior antagonist. He was born not to be a coward. He was a good fighter. Although he often found himself in a minority of one, he found enjoyment in the feeling that he was right according to his abstract principles.

For us, the most interesting result of this independence is his resolution not to be satisfied with anything short of his best in writing. Two fine examples always stood before him—Montaigne, 'who may be said to have been the first to say as an author what he felt as a man,' and Burke, who 'poured out his mind on paper.' He has told us, in many places, of his difficulty in learning how to write.

> Oh, how little do they know who have never done anything but repeat after others by rote, the labor, the yearnings and misgivings of mind it costs to get the germ of an original idea, to dig it out of the hidden recesses of thought and nature and to bring it half-ashamed, struggling, and deformed into the day—to give words and intelligible symbols to that which was never imagined or expressed before.

That he succeeded to an unusual degree in his ambition is now a matter of record. Coleridge wrote of him that 'he said things in his own way.' His vigorous mind, seriously given to thinking, would not be satisfied with expression that fell short of his conception of clearness. He was not content with the homely simplicity of Defoe, or the intellectual force of Swift: he aspired to succeed, as Burke had succeeded, in conveying something of the beauty and eloquence of truth and nature. What he wrote must express all the shades of his sensitive imagination. It is not strange, then, that he knew the meaning of words and strove unceasingly to get the proper word for the proper place. The ephemeral word or phrase found no place in his style, nor was he given to coining words or to transplanting foreign words. Consequently, his diction is remarkable for its purity. How well he made the standard English vocabulary serve his purpose may be found in his description of *The Fight*, where he does not feel the need of adopting the slang of the ring to give a thrilling account of an exciting contest. It is interesting to contrast this passage with De Quincey's *Murder as one of the Fine Arts.* Not only did he search for the right word but he strove for conciseness in so far as the language would convey all that he wished to say. 'I hate to see a load of band-boxes go along the street, and I hate to see a parcel of big words without anything in them.'

Hazlitt seems never to have been without the word which would express with directness and vividness what was in his mind. That he could parry as with a rapier, William Gifford must have learned to his discomfort while he read the celebrated *Letter*. De Quincey called his style 'abrupt, insulated, capricious, and ... non-sequacious.' There is a sense in which this is true. For a time, the thought seems not to move. It is thrown into the air like balls by a juggler, and we catch reflections of it, and are thrilled and excited to pleasure in watching. One happy phrase after another—an old quotation in a new setting, a flash of sentiment, a bit of keen perceiving, a wise observation on life—all thrown together, carry us on with a rapidity and a stateliness that are not excelled in English literature.

The opening passage of his essay on poetry illustrates the movement of his expository writing. Here, we have Hazlitt thinking with overflowing zest upon a subject which was life to him. Because he is trying to write something on a subject which every critic or poet has discussed does not embarrass him. As a man of feeling, who cannot reduce poetry to mere formal words, he pours himself out with the richness and seriousness of the most unabashed romanticist.

Or we may turn to his essay, *The Feeling of Immortality in Youth*, to the passage beginning 'To see the golden sun, and the azure sky.' Observe the gusto with which he follows the thought until he is actually out of breath. Here is the elaborate stateliness of Sir Thomas Browne or Jeremy Taylor without the quaintness of the seventeenth century which allured Charles Lamb. In outline, it is formal and imposing; in meaning, it is concrete, vivid and personal.

The virility of his enthusiasm is best shown in his delight in outdoor life. No writer of today, after a century given to the study and enjoyment of open air life, writes of it with greater zest and more consistent inspiration. His essay, *On Going a Journey*, is a pleasure to all lovers of Stevenson and Thoreau.

In many respects, the most memorable piece of writing of William Hazlitt is the essay to which he has given the attractive title, *My First Acquaintance with Poets*, one of the fine, immortal essays in our language. The young man of twenty meets in 1798 the philosopher Coleridge and the poet Wordsworth. The man of forty looks back through the glamour of the intervening years and breaks forth with lyric enthusiasm at the thought of these rich experiences.

In these essays, we have some of the best of Hazlitt—an expression which is concrete, vivid, personal, vigorous; the voice of a manly and courageous seeker after truth, who sees nothing inconsistent in the combination of truth and sentiment, truth and beauty.

Hazlitt's habit of repeated quotation has caused irritation to many readers. He used innumerable quotations, consisting of a mere phrase or of many lines, whenever he desired. If they do not serve him as they stand, he does not hesitate to change a word or phrase or to join two or more quotations together. He took supreme pleasure in an apt phrase, whether of his own coinage or whether he had picked it up long before in some source which he had taken no pains to remember. He sought justification in the manner in which he made his quotations convey his own ideas. Some of the lines which he liked best to quote are here given as he wrote them. 'Our life is of mingled yarn, good and ill together,' 'holds the mirror up to nature,' 'web of our life,' 'too much i' the sun,' 'comes home to the business of men,' 'the stuff of which our life is made,' 'sees into the life of things,' 'ever in the haunch of winter sings,' 'fate, free-will, foreknowledge absolute,' 'come like shadows, so depart,' 'at one proud swoop,' 'with all its giddy raptures,' 'the witchery of the soft blue sky,' 'it smiled and it was cold,' 'sounding on his way,' 'men's minds are parcel of their fortunes.' A glance at this list will show the preponderance of quotations from Shakespeare. These he applied everywhere and in every possible connection. Next after Shakespeare, as sources, come Milton, the Bible, Spenser, Dryden, Pope, Gray, Cowper, Rousseau, Sterne, Fielding, Wordsworth. He had not the slightest reluctance to appropriate a phrase that he liked in any book which he read.

One characteristic marks his style especially, his use of the parallel construction and contrast. He liked to join his subjects in pairs; for example, *Cant and Hypocrisy, Wit and Humour, Past and Future, Thought and Action, Genius and Common Sense, Patronage and Puffing, Writing and Speaking* and so on *ad infinitum.* So, he was much accustomed to discussing his subject with the aid of contrast, as Wilkie and Hogarth, Shakespeare and Jonson, Chaucer and Spenser, Voltaire and Swift, Thomson and Cowper, Addison and Steele, Gray and Collins, Dryden and Pope. In this particular, he had an influence upon modern literary criticism, which has often used this means of defining the relative importance of English writers.

Some readers, nourished on the fare of the Victorians, have objected to Hazlitt on the ground that his writing shows mere feeling and no moral purpose. Certainly, one does not think of him as a moralist with a message like Carlyle, Ruskin, Arnold, or Browning, yet he, like all great English writers, was guided by certain principles and was consistently true to certain ideals.

Hazlitt was as bitter against affectation and insipidity as Carlyle or Thackeray. Not more insistently than he, did Carlyle try to get beneath mere clothes and separate the symbol from the thing. Ruskin had no more genuine love of nature and saw not more clearly than Hazlitt the relation between life and the beauty of nature. In his efforts to think clearly upon life and to express himself with classic simplicity, there is a suggestion of Matthew Arnold. In his virility of expression and the hopefulness with which he wrote in continued adversity, we find something that suggests the optimism of Browning and Stevenson. Though he was not a moralist according to the general meaning of that word, he never turned from the serious problem of life. He was no shallow optimist or railing pessimist. There is, throughout his writing, an abiding faith in human nature, a devotion to beauty and an allegiance to ideals of square-dealing, honesty and truthfulness, that made his life happy when those who looked on—all save one—called him of all men most lonely and miserable.

The influence of Hazlitt has been pervasive through the nineteenth century. Among his contemporaries, there were those who would have nothing to do with his idols, Rousseau and Napoleon, who did not share his radical views on politics, who despised his enthusiastic style as mere sentimental twaddle. On the other hand, there were those who, like Leigh Hunt, Lamb, Coleridge and De Quincey, recognised, in some measure, the worth of the man. Certain of the reviewers in the magazines, though they took delight in abusing him personally, had good cause for admiring his literary skill when they were the objects of his invective. Among the great writers of English since his day, he has found many admirers and imitators, many who have followed his lead in his appreciation of art and of literature. Macaulay had a fondness for the same balanced structure, the same tendency toward epigrammatic expression, the same persistent determination to write with unmistakable clearness. Newman's style bore ample testimony to the eloquence which Hazlitt displayed in his most stately writing. Thackeray wrote heartily in admiration:

> Hazlitt was one of the keenest and brightest critics that ever lived. With partialities and prejudices innumerable, he had a wit so keen, a sensibility so exquisite, an appreciation of humour or pathos or even of the greatest art so lively, quick and cultivated, that it was always good to know what were the impressions made by books or men or pictures on such a mind; and that, as there were not probably a dozen men in England with powers so varied, all the rest of the world might be rejoiced to listen to the opinions of this accomplished critic.

In similar vein wrote Froude, Bagehot, Lowell, Stevenson and many other worthy judges of our best literature. Perhaps the surest comment which indicates the estimate of today is by William Ernest Henley in the concluding paragraph of his introduction to the complete edition of Hazlitt's works, already cited:

> As a writer, therefore, it is with Lamb that I would bracket him: they are dissimilars, but they go gallantly and naturally together—*par nobile fratrum.* Give us these two, with some ripe Cobbett, a volume of Southey, some Wordsworth, certain pages of Shelley, a great deal of the Byron who wrote letters, and we get the right prose of the time. The best of it all, perhaps, is the best of Lamb. But Hazlitt's, for different qualities, is so eminent and shining a second that I hesitate as to the pre-eminency. Probably the race is Lamb's. But Hazlitt is ever Hazlitt; and at his highest moments Hazlitt is hard to beat, and has not these many years been beaten.

CHAPTER VIII

LAMB

By reason of its intimate nature and the colour which it took from the personal events of his life, the work of Charles Lamb is inseparable from the circumstances in which it came into being. This is peculiarly true of more than one of the great writers of the early nineteenth century. The biographies of Byron, Shelley and Coleridge are necessary complements to the understanding of their poetry. But, in none of these three cases is a succession of incidents so closely interwoven in prose and poetry as is the more peaceful life of Lamb in his writings. Those writings, inspired by the influence of the moment and by a lively remembrance of the past, take their place in the course of a story on which they form a running comment; and it is this story, chequered by the presence of sorrow and tragedy and beautified by the endurance of high human affection, which has given Lamb a special place in literary history. His genius matured in submission to its influence: the experience of daily life was the source of the sympathy with humanity which pervades his style and lends to it an abiding charm.

Lamb's statement that his father came from Lincoln has never been proved positively, but is probably an exception to his usual habit of embroidering fiction upon fact. John Lamb, whose characteristics are known to us from his son's affectionate portrait of Lovel, 'a man of an incorrigible and losing honesty,' with 'a face as gay as Garrick's, whom he was said greatly to resemble,' was clerk and general factotum to Samuel Salt of the Inner Temple. The father, 'as brimful of rogueries and inventions as you could desire,' gave some proof of literary talent in a small volume entitled *Poetical Pieces on Several Occasions*, the best of which, an amusing description of the daily routine of a lady's footman, was probably drawn from his own early experience. He married Elizabeth Field, a member of a family of Hertfordshire farmers.

They lived in Salt's house at 2 Crown office row, in the Inner Temple, Mrs Lamb acting as housekeeper. Their eldest son, John, described by Lamb as James Elia, was born in June 1763. Mary Lamb was the second surviving child, born in December 1764. Charles, the youngest, was born on 10 February 1775. Four other children, two boys and two girls, died in infancy.

Salt's house in the Temple was Lamb's home for the first seventeen years of his life. Here, Mary Lamb, ten years his senior,

> was tumbled early, by accident or design, into a spacious closet of good old English reading, without much selection or prohibition, and browsed at will upon that fair and wholesome pasturage.

In the quiet courts and 'bricky towres' of the Temple, close to, yet aloof from, 'streaming London's central roar,' Lamb learned to survey the ways of the world about him with sympathetic observation, and to interpret them in their true proportions with an amused delight at their variety and movement. London, 'itself a pantomime and masquerade,' early enveloped him with its attraction. 'I often shed tears in the motley Strand,' he wrote to Wordsworth in 1801, 'from fulness of joy at so much life.' To Manning and to Robert Lloyd, his praise of his native city is equally lyric, and, throughout life, London continued to supply his imagination with material upon which it readily worked its fantasies.

Lamb learned reading and writing at a day-school in Fetter lane, kept by one William Bird, which he attended with his sister and afterwards described in *Captain Starkey*, one of the essays contributed to Hone's *Every-Day Book*. In October 1782, he entered Christ's hospital, having been presented to the foundation by one of the governors, a friend of Samuel Salt. His recollections of the seven years spent here are embodied in an essay printed in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for June 1813, and in the more famous essay in which he blended his own experiences with the less happy memories of his contemporary Coleridge. The friendship with Coleridge, begun at Christ's hospital, lasted, with one short break, throughout their lives. In a famous apostrophe, touched with that sense of regret for wasted energy and unfulfilled hope which Coleridge's later career naturally inspired, Lamb has recorded his admiration for the precocious genius of his friend. Coleridge, equally affectionate but less alive to reality, has characterised Lamb as the 'gentle-hearted Charles.' Gentle-hearted as he was in the best sense of the word, Lamb resented the epithet, and, in fact, he was made of sterner stuff than Coleridge and proved his capacity to face the facts of a world which, to the poet and philosopher, was an unsubstantial vision.

In estimating the influence of early memories and friendships upon Lamb's work, it is impossible to overlook his connection with his mother's native county Hertford. His grandmother, Mrs Field, was housekeeper at Blakesware, a large country house in the parish of Widford, four miles east of Ware. The Plumers, its owners, lived principally at Gilston, some miles away, and left Blakesware in charge of Mrs Field. Charles and Mary Lamb spent many holidays here, roaming freely through the deserted mansion. In the autumn of 1799, Lamb revisited the place and wrote to Southey of the tapestried bedroom and the old 'marble hall, with Hogarth's prints, and the Roman Caesars in marble hung round,' of the wilderness and the village churchyard by the park gates, 'where the bones of my honoured grandam lie.' Mary Lamb described the house and recalled a childish experience of her own in *The Young Mahometan*, one of the tales in *Mrs Leicester's School.* The power of Blakesware upon Lamb's growing imagination is drawn in *Blakesmoor in H——shire*, where we see him sitting in the window-seat of the store-room, reading Cowley, wandering through the house and creeping into the haunted room, 'but always in the daytime, with a passion of fear,' so fascinated by 'the boundaries of his Eden,' that he was ignorant of what lay beyond, and fancied the brook which ran outside the park, 'half hid by trees,' to be a romantic lake. In *Dream-Children*, Blakesware is again described, with its empty rooms, gardens, orangery and fish-pond; his grandmother, bowed down physically with wasting disease but unbowed in spirit, rises before his memory; he recalls her special affection for his elder brother John, 'so handsome and spirited a youth, and a king to the rest of us.' A more shadowy reminiscence is the fair-haired Alice, connected in thought with the portrait of the Hertfordshire beauty which 'hung next the great bay-window' and was the subject of Mary Lamb's stanzas to 'High-born Helen.' 'The green plains of pleasant Hertfordshire' supplied a life-long attraction to Lamb, from the days when, a boy at school, he attempted to trace the New River to its source, to the long walks of later years, when he roamed about Enfield or, with Mary Lamb and Barron Field, made his pilgrimage from St Albans to the home of his relations at Mackery End. It was in these quiet byways that he found his true point of contact with nature; and the placid grace which dispenses its charm amid the parks and woods, grass-bordered lanes and open greens of Hertfordshire is not unlike the tranquil beauty, never far from poetry, of his prose.

Lamb left Christ's hospital in 1789, and, two years later, obtained a temporary appointment in the examiner's office in the South-Sea house, which he held from September 1791 to February 1792. This dignified establishment, in the unexacting service of which his brother John spent his life, is described in the first essay of *Elia*. In April 1792, he entered a scene of greater activity in the East India house in Leadenhall street, where, for thirty-three years, he performed his daily duties. In this year, Samuel Salt died and the Lamb family left the Temple, to settle eventually at 7 Little Queen street, Holborn. Between 1792 and 1796, the friendship with Coleridge continued, and Coleridge fathered Lamb's earliest sonnet, which was printed under the initials S.T.C. in *The Morning Chronicle* of 29 December 1794. Bowles, 'genius of the sacred fountain of tears,' was the inspirer of this and other sonnets, which, by May 1796, had reached the number of nine. Four of these were published in Coleridge's *Poems on Various Subjects* in 1796, and another, addressed to Mary Lamb, is contained in the earliest of the letters to Coleridge which has been preserved. This sonnet was written in a lunatic asylum at Hoxton, where Lamb spent the six weeks at the end of 1795 and the beginning of 1796. There was insanity in his family, which was soon to declare itself tragically; but this was the only occasion on which Lamb himself was affected by it, and the cause which disturbed him so seriously can only be conjectured. The correspondence with Coleridge, extending from May 1796 to June 1798, has its moments of playfulness, but is overcast by the melancholy of one who feels himself solitary. Old schoolfellows, however, occasionally came to see him, among them James White, whom he assisted in the authorship of *The Falstaff Letters*; and he improved his acquaintance with the scholarly and unpractical George Dyer, twenty years his elder. The letters are full of allusions to his reading, chiefly among old English authors, and contain much criticism of Coleridge's early verse, especially of *Religious Musings*, to the fineness, and to the inequality, of which Lamb showed himself fully alive. He advocated unitarianism and expressed admiration for Priestley with a fervour which, although it declined in later years, gave permanent colour to his religious convictions, so far as we can gain any glimpse of them.

For a time, however, the consolations of religion were foremost in his mind. His mother had, for some time, been helpless and dependent upon the care of her daughter. On 22 September 1796, Mary had a sudden fit of insanity, in which she killed her mother. She was removed to a private asylum at Islington, and Charles and his father went to 45 Chapel street, Pentonville. Sarah Lamb, an aunt who lived with the family, was taken into the house of a rich relation, but soon returned to her brother and nephew, dying early in 1797. Lamb, thus, in his twenty-third year, had 'the whole weight of the family' thrown on him—a father in his second childhood, a dying aunt and a sister whose returning reason was liable to fail again at any moment. John, the elder brother, though possessed of many good qualities, was wrapped up in his own affairs. It would have been easy to have taken his advice and consigned Mary permanently to a madhouse; but Charles preferred to make a home for his sister. During her father's lifetime, rooms were found for her at Hackney. Here, Charles spent his Sundays and holidays, and, when their father died in 1799, she took up her abode permanently with her brother, leaving him only when the threatenings of recurrent attacks of insanity made it necessary.

In 1796 began the association between Coleridge and Charles Lloyd, a sensitive young Birmingham quaker; and, in January 1797, Lloyd unexpectedly sought Lamb out in London. Lamb, still suffering from a sense of loneliness and neglect, conceived a strong attachment for his friend's disciple. To the second edition of Coleridge's *Poems* (October 1797) were added poems by Lamb and Lloyd; and in 1798 appeared a small volume of *Blank Verse, by Charles Lloyd and Charles Lamb*, to which Lamb contributed seven poems, including *The Old Familiar Faces*, one of the most perfect expressions in English of infinite regret tempered by resignation. Friendship with Lloyd meant much pleasant literary intercourse, and from one particular branch of literature to which Lloyd introduced him Lamb learned a sympathy with quakerism and its staid reliance upon 'the inward light' as the source of intellectual peace, a sympathy which never left him. Lloyd, however, was not the best companion for a man in need of bracing society. Lamb early discovered in him 'an exquisiteness of feeling' which 'must border on derangement,' and, a year after his first visit, found himself on the brink of a quarrel, for which, however, he blamed his own impatience at Lloyd's well-meant devotion. Coleridge, meanwhile, had somewhat tired of Lloyd, and a growing coolness developed into open rupture. In *Edmund Oliver*, a novel published in 1798, Lloyd vented some of his feeling against Coleridge, and by this time his wounded vanity had effected a breach between Coleridge and Lamb. He told Lamb—inexcusably, even if it were true—that Coleridge had said, 'Poor Lamb! if he wants any *knowledge*, he may apply to me.' Lamb's retort to this was *Theses quaedam theologicae*, enclosed in a letter written in June 1798. For once in their friendship, Lamb showed himself the weaker man of the two. His *Theses*, clever as they are, might have led to the permanent sundering of a friendship as salutary to Coleridge as it was inspiring to Lamb, had not Coleridge magnanimously overlooked the affront. Within little more than a year, they were again friends. In the interval, Lamb had probably seen more than enough of Charles Lloyd. In January 1799, a younger brother, Robert, who had rebelled against the quaker traditions of his family, sought refuge with Lamb from his father's supposed persecution. To this amiable youth, whose chief fault was a readiness to manufacture his own troubles, Lamb addressed a number of letters, one or two of them among the best that he wrote. Lamb recognised him as 'the flower of his family,' and his early death was a source of deep grief to a household which, in spite of disagreements, was united by close bonds of affection. In later years, Lamb sent criticisms to the father of the Lloyds upon his verse translations of classical authors; but the friendship with Charles Lloyd gradually ceased. Lloyd's sensitiveness grew upon him with years: he became a prey to nervous melancholy and died near Versailles in 1839, with his reason hopelessly overclouded.

Lamb's first independent work in prose, *A Tale of Rosamund Gray and Old Blind Margaret*, was published in the summer of 1798. Already, as we have seen, he had had some share in White's *Original Letters, etc., of Sir John Falstaff* in July 1796. *Rosamund Gray*, told in simple prose interwoven with literary phrase, remembered and appropriated from his reading, is a sombre and tragic narrative. In its theme of undeserved misfortune overtaking the young and innocent, Lamb had his own experiences in mind. The resignation of Allan Clare, the survivor of his elder sister and his dead love, is uttered by Lamb himself.

> I gave my heart to the Purifier, and my will to the Sovereign Will of the Universe. The irresistible wheels of destiny passed on in their everlasting rotation,—and I suffered myself to be carried along with them without complaining.

The scene of the story is Widford; Blakesware, the home of Allan and Elinor Clare, is visited in memory by the narrator; and in the ill-fated Rosamund is bodied forth the Alice of *Elia*. In Elinor, whose relation to Allan resembles that of Mary Lamb to Charles, there is a reminiscence of 'high-born Helen'; and it is at her grave, not at that of Rosamund, that Allan and his friend meet again. Thus, Lamb showed his capacity of transmuting his pleasures and sorrows into forms of imagination and of treading the border-line between truth and fiction with an unmatched delicacy. Even in his melancholy, he could not fail to reproduce something of the double aspect of life; and occasional gentle touches of amused observation prove his power of balancing and reconciling the comic and tragic elements in human nature.

To Southey, Lamb's principal correspondent at this period, he wrote, on 29 October 1798, in a letter which throws some light upon the composition of *Rosamund Gray*, that he was at work 'upon something, which, if I were to cut away and garble, perhaps I might send you an extract or two that might not displease you.' This was the tragedy first called *Pride's Cure*, but, in its revised form, *John Woodvil*. Although without great original merit or dramatic interest, it bears witness to Lamb's faithful study of the early Elizabethan drama, in its phraseology, in the varying length and broken rhythm of its lines and in the alternation of verse with prose. Lamb showed two fragments, one of which was afterwards published separately, to George Dyer, whose classical taste 'could not comprehend how *that* could be poetry which did not go upon ten feet.' 'I go,' he wrote again to Southey (20 May 1799), 'upon the model of Shakspeare in my Play, and endeavour after a colloquial ease and spirit, something like him.' The style, while frequently recalling that of Shakespeare's historical plays, is closely akin to that of such dramas as *Arden of Feversham*, founded on English subjects and preserving, with occasional exaltation of phrase, a general homeliness of diction.

In these pursuits, Lamb gradually shook off his melancholy. To his life with Mary in Pentonville belong those reminiscences afterwards recorded in *Old China*—the little luxuries permitted by a scanty income, the holiday walks to Potter's bar, Waltham and Enfield, the folio Beaumont and Fletcher carried home one

Saturday night from Covent garden, the purchase of the print from Leonardo which Lamb called 'Lady Blanch,' the visits to the shilling gallery of the theatre. The play, pictures and old English literature above all, became the three objects of Lamb's enthusiasm, relieving his mind after his daily routine and alleviating the anxiety inseparable from his affection for Mary. In December 1799, he made a new and valuable friend. On a visit to Charles Lloyd at Cambridge, he met Thomas Manning, a mathematician of Caius, versatile and laughter-loving. Their correspondence produced a series of letters full of Lamb's peculiar humour. Cambridge also held George Dyer of Emmanuel, whose oddity and touching simplicity were a microcosm of the eternal contradictions of life in which Lamb delighted. Into *Oxford in the Vacation,* with its disclosure of his attraction towards the universities whose privileges he had been unable to share, Lamb interwove memories of Cambridge and introduced the portrait of Dyer in the library of his college. His first visit to Oxford took place in the summer of 1800, when he passed two days with the family of Matthew Gutch, a law-stationer in London. Gutch had offered him a lodging at 34 Southampton buildings, Chancery lane, and here he settled with Mary in the late summer of 1800.

His literary work during the next few years was desultory. In March 1800, Coleridge had spent some weeks with him in Pentonville and suggested to him to contribute to a newspaper an imitation of Burton's *Anatomy,* which bore fruit in the three *Curious Fragments* printed with *John Woodvil* in 1802. In the same volume were also printed the lines called *Hypochondriacus,* composed about this time, which show an appreciation of Burton's melancholy not less remarkable than the prose fragments in reproduction of his style. These first attempts at writing for newspapers were not accepted, which is hardly surprising. Lamb, meanwhile, was increasing his acquaintance. His lodgings in Southampton buildings were so crowded by visitors that they resembled a 'minister's levee,' and, at Lady day 1801, he found it convenient to seek new quarters in the attic story of 16 Mitre court buildings, in the Temple. He obtained a footing on *The Albion,* which ended in August 1801, and then, after a short connection with *The Morning Chronicle,* worked for *The Morning Post* from 1802 to 1804. His contributions to these journals were, for the most part, ephemeral; his most remarkable feat was an epigram upon the apostasy of Sir James Mackintosh from radicalism, which proved the death-blow of *The Albion.*

Newspapers Thirty-five years ago contains a record, with some confusion of facts and dates, of this period, and an amusing specimen of the consciously laboured humour with which Lamb sought to enliven *The Morning Post.* His journalistic life brought him into contact with a somewhat different order of friends, 'men of boisterous spirits, sitters up a-nights, disputants, drunken,' who 'yet seemed to have something noble about them.' One of them, John Fenwick, the editor of *The Albion*, lives in *Elia* as Ralph Bigod, the representative of 'the *great* race' of men who borrow. In their society, figuring as 'a profest joker,' Lamb certainly confirmed a taste for 'tipple and tobacco,' and a habit of sitting up into the small hours, which were a disadvantage to his nervous temperament; but he also widened his views of human nature and learned to forget his troubles, or, at any rate, to see them in their true proportions.

John Woodvil was published early in 1802 with the complement of *Curious Fragments* from Burton, Mary Lamb's 'High-born Helen' and a few other pieces. In the summer of the same year, the Lambs visited Coleridge at Greta hall. The sunset as they drove from Penrith and the view from Skiddaw, with other pleasant experiences, satisfied Lamb 'that there is such a thing as that which tourists call *romantic*, which I very much suspected before'; but he came to the sensible conclusion that 'Fleet Street and the Strand are better places to live in for good and all than amidst Skiddaw.' The landmarks of the next few years are scanty—a visit to the isle of Wight in 1803, an attack of depression early in 1805 and a return of Mary's illness in the following summer. With her recovery, Lamb's spirits rose, and, early in 1806, he submitted his farce *Mr H*—— for production on the stage. In May 1806, he suffered a serious loss in the departure of Manning for China. But, new work and interests helped to atone for the withdrawal of Manning's 'steadiness and quiet, which used to infuse something like itself into our nervous minds.' The friendship of Wordsworth and his sister afforded that calm sympathy of which the Lambs stood much in need; the society of John Rickman, whose accomplishments, as 'a pleasant hand,' Lamb had discovered in 1800, of Martin Burney and others, was near at hand; and Hazlitt, the future husband of Mary Lamb's friend, Sarah Stoddart, quickened his love of art. In a farewell letter to Manning (10 May 1806), he described the beginning of *Tales from Shakespear*, undertaken at the recommendation of William Godwin, whom Lamb liked as cordially as he detested Godwin's second wife. Mary charged herself with the adaptation of twenty plays of Shakespeare 'for the Use of Young Persons': Lamb himself had finished *Othello* and *Macbeth* when he wrote to Manning, and contributed four more tales to the ultimate collection, of which the remaining fourteen were by Mary.

Before the appearance of this classic in January 1807, Lamb's venture in farce was tried publicly and failed. It was accepted in June 1806 at Drury lane, and was produced on 10 December, with Elliston in the title *rôle*. Its point is the preservation by Mr H—— of his anonymity, in order to secure a bride whom his real name Hogsflesh will disgust. By a slip of the tongue, he discloses his name prematurely; but, the danger to his happiness is removed by the timely arrival of a licence empowering him to change his name to Bacon. The thinness of the subject is ill disguised by Lamb's gift of punning, to which it gave some opportunity. The author, a just critic of his own work, joined in hissing it and bore his mortification stoically. Although he now and then returned to dramatic writing, he never produced another play on the boards.

Tales from Shakespear have had a very different fate. They belong to a type of literature requiring gifts which are seldom found in perfect proportion. The tale must attract the reader for its own sake; but its object is missed unless it attracts him further to study its source. In this case, the task was all the more difficult because the originals are the highest achievements of dramatic poetry. Shakespeare's language had to be interwoven with the story and demanded a selection of phrase which would arrest a young reader's attention without overtaxing his intelligence. The familiarity with old literature which Mary had acquired in Samuel Salt's book-closet and Charles had improved in the library at Blakesware stood them in good stead. They were still able to bring to the plays the impressions of childhood, to reproduce in simple prose the phrases that had awakened their imaginations and to supply that commentary upon characters and incidents which a child needs, without over-burdening the easy narrative. It is not too much to say that the collection forms one of the most conspicuous landmarks in the history of the romantic movement. It is the first book which, appealing to a general audience and to a rising generation, made Shakespeare a familiar and popular author and, in so doing, asserted the claims of the older literature which, to English people at large, was little more than a name. *The Adventures of Ulysses*, written by Lamb alone and published by Godwin in 1808, was a further experiment in the same direction, founded upon Chapman's translation of the *Odyssey*, and suggested by the popularity of Fénelon's *Aventures de Télémaque.* In the qualities of simple style and narrative, it is a worthy successor to *Tales from Shakespear.* It has not achieved, however, an equal reputation. While *Tales from Shakespear* is drawn directly from an original source abounding in human interest, *The Adventures of Ulysses* is an attempt to familiarise readers with a poem which, with all its beauty and vigour, is merely a reflection, often disturbed and imperfect, of the special qualities of the *Odyssey.* Apart from purely literary considerations, both books are a valuable testimony to the purity and simplicity of Lamb's character. The bright visions of youth were still strong enough to chase the shades of the prison-house which had threatened Lamb's early manhood. Further, Mary Lamb's contributions to *Tales from Shakespear* prove that her sound judgment, in the normal state of her reason, was not a mere figment of an affectionate brother's imagination.

At the close of 1808, Lamb conferred a remarkable boon upon students of our older authors by the publication of *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets, who lived About the Time of Shakspeare.* The selections, covering the whole field of the English drama from *Gorboduc* to Shirley, discharge the proper office of selections in that, chosen, as they were, with the fullest discrimination, they whet the appetite for more of the same dish. Lamb's judiciously brief comments are among the classics of English criticism. He had the enthusiasm of the discoverer and, here and there, allowed it to obscure his critical faculty. Admiration of the scene in which Calantha, in Ford's *Broken Heart*, 'with holy violence against her nature,' continues to dance while news of successive tragedies are whispered into her ear, tempted him into a comparison out of all proportion to the actual merits of the episode. Yet, the self-sacrifice of Ordella, in Fletcher's *Thierry and Theodoret*, that 'piece of sainted nature' whom, next to Calantha, he reckoned 'the most perfect notion of the female heroic character,' seemed to him 'faint and languid' as compared with Shakespeare at his best, and formed the basis for just remarks upon Fletcher's fondness for 'unnatural and violent situations' and the artificiality of his versification and wit. Equally just are the sparing praise of Middleton's over-lauded drama, *The Witch*, and the intuitive recognition of the passion which finds an imperfectly articulate outlet in the plays and translations of Chapman. The thought of Shakespeare is always present. Heywood is 'a sort of *prose* Shakspeare,' with his feeling, but without his command of expression; Chapman 'perhaps approaches nearest to Shakspeare in the descriptive and didactic, in passages which are less purely dramatic.' The funeral dirge in Webster's *White Devil* challenges comparison with 'Full fathom five' in *The Tempest*: 'as that is of the water, watery; so this is of the earth, earthy.' Shakespearean reminiscence pervades the style of these notes; Lamb constantly seeks comparisons from the greatest of dramatists and finds in his words a never-failing source of apt expression. At its best, as in the notes on Webster, his prose becomes lyric, with a pregnancy of phrase that leaves a peculiarly vivid impression of the characteristics which it illustrates.

In *Mrs Leicester's School*, which was nearly contemporary with *Specimens*, Mary Lamb had the principal share. Lamb himself contributed three of the ten stories, anecdotes of childhood supposed to be related by the pupils of a ladies' school at Amwell in Hertfordshire and reduced to writing by one of their teachers. Autobiography enters largely into these charming stories: in *The Young Mahometan*, Mary wrote down her memories of Blakesware and recorded her own childish perversion to Mohammedanism, caused by one of Samuel Salt's miscellaneous collection of books, while, in the *Visit to the Cousins*, she recalled a child's first impressions of the play and its interest in the figures which struck the quarters upon the clock of St Dunstan's, and introduced her young heroine to the Juvenile library in Skinner street, paying, with sly humour, an incidental tribute to the persuasive powers of Mrs Godwin. *The Witch Aunt* was founded by Lamb upon a reminiscence to which he referred later in *Witches and other Night Fears*, and *First Going to Church* blends memories of the Temple church with Coleridge's youth at Ottery St Mary. The bells of Ottery, whose identity Lamb veiled later under the disguise of 'sweet Calne in Wiltshire,' had already made their music heard in *John Woodvil*. With *Mrs Leicester's School* and the artless rimes of *Poetry for Children*, tales and apologues in which the moral element, sugared with humour and softened by pathos, plays a large part, the joint work of the brother and sister came to an end. *Prince Dorus*, a fairy-tale in decasyllabic couplets, published by Mrs Godwin in 1811, was Lamb's last work for children.

On 27 May 1809, the Lambs moved into new quarters at 4 Inner Temple lane, after a short return to Southampton buildings. The anxiety of the move brought on one of Mary's attacks, and, in the autumn, he took her to visit the Hazlitts at Winterslow, where she recovered health, and they had long walks to Wilton, Salisbury and Stonehenge—Wilton, with its treasures of painting and sculpture, characteristically taking the first place in Lamb's enumeration of these excursions. The visit was renewed in the following summer, but with less satisfaction; the return journey was made by way of Oxford and Blenheim, and thence to Bury St Edmunds, and ended in Mary's serious relapse, which clouded the early autumn of 1810. Meanwhile, Lamb found pleasure in his two sitting-rooms on the third floor of the house in Inner Temple lane, the print-room hung with the works of Hogarth and the book-room with its 'small but well-chosen library.' In these rooms, the resort of Martin Burney and the 'card-boys' and of other friends who gathered round him in the evenings when his work at the India house was over, he spent some eight years. His letters during this period include a number addressed to Wordsworth, crowded with critical and humourous *obiter dicta* and appreciation of his correspondent's poems. His life was chequered by moments of sadness, but his earlier depression vanished; he could even speak lightly of the trouble which brooded over his house and say that 'the wind is tempered to the shorn Lambs.' Outer events touched him but little: there are allusions in his letters to the Napoleonic catastrophe in 1814 and 1815, but they are those of a mere spectator of the drama. His catholicity of temperament allowed him to preserve his friendship with the poets whose revolutionary sympathies had been transformed into conservatism, while he was able to extend it to Hazlitt and Leigh Hunt at the opposite pole of radicalism. 'What any man can write,' he wrote to Wordsworth in 1815, 'surely I may read.' This principle, *mutatis mutandis,* applies to his choice of friends.

Small in volume as his work was between 1810 and 1820, it is the work of one whose power of conversation and faculty of criticism were felt by all who came into contact with him. His natural shyness and an impediment in his speech prevented him, even if he had wished it, from dominating a literary circle; but, his sound good sense, abundant sympathy and whimsical gaiety of utterance gave him peculiar influence with his friends. His own highest achievements were yet to come. When he began to write for Leigh Hunt in *The Reflector* in 1810, he had had comparatively little experience in essay-writing. Casual criticism in letter-writing is another thing; and the masterly estimate of

Jeremy Taylor, in one of his letters to Robert Lloyd, is marked by considerably more freedom and liveliness than are the valuable, but somewhat laboured, articles in *The Reflector* upon *The Genius and Character of Hogarth* and *The Tragedies of Shakespeare.* His genius, however, for apt illustration of his favourite authors, was again proved in *Specimens from the Writings of Fuller* printed in the same periodical at the end of 1811; and the passages of *Table-Talk* contributed to *The Examiner* in 1813 have the same brief and pregnant character. The review of Wordsworth's *Excursion* in *The Quarterly* for October 1814 was mangled by Gifford to the injury of what, in Lamb's own and Mary's opinions, was 'the prettiest piece of prose I ever writ.'

Distinct from his critical essays at this time are the humourous letters, modelled upon the pattern of *The Tatler* and *The Spectator,* which Lamb wrote for *The Reflector* in 1810 and 1811. Such essays as that *On the Inconveniences Resulting from being Hanged* are specimens of a humour which, amusing enough in the warmth of conversation, sparkles less brightly in print. His humour needed the touch of personal reminiscence, the softening of laughter by the wistful memory of the past. This vein is hardly touched in *Recollections of Christ's Hospital,* printed in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for June 1813, which, with a foretaste of that gift of portraiture which enlivens many pages of *Elia,* is serious and matter-of-fact. For the present, his written humour took a serio-comic direction, playing with grim subjects and identifying itself with imaginary topics. There is, however, one notorious exception which, founded, to some extent, upon his own experience, has had a baneful effect upon estimates of his character. *Confessions of a Drunkard,* printed in *The Philanthropist* for January 1813, pictures, in moving terms, the misery of a slave to drink and tobacco. Its object was, undoubtedly, serious, and it is equally certain that Lamb traced in it the progress of his own undeniable affection for these accompaniments of his evenings, with some genuine regret, corroborated by his letters, that he was not superior to their seductions. But he was capable, even for a serious purpose, of using his imagination to describe sensations and sentiments which, as a matter of fact, were an exaggeration of his own. At all times, the incidents of his life became stories in which he played at will with his own personality. *Confessions of a Drunkard* was reprinted in *The London Magazine* for August 1822, when Elia was at the height of his magic powers, and was able to jest ruefully to Dorothy Wordsworth upon the warnings of rheumatism against his favourite beverages. In 1821, De Quincey had published *Confessions of an Opium Eater* in the same magazine, embroidering fancy upon fact with portentous seriousness; and it is in keeping with Lamb's spirit of mischief that he should have furbished up his old essay in the following year to mystify his readers with an avowal in marked contrast to the tone of those impenitent disclosures. His annoyance at the gratuitous assumption of *The Quarterly* that the essay was 'a genuine description of the state of the writer' amounts to a denial.

At the end of 1817, the Lambs, as Mary wrote to Dorothy Wordsworth, 'mustered up resolution enough' to leave their chambers in the Temple for lodgings over a brazier's shop at 20 Russell street, Covent garden, 'a place all alive with noise and bustle; Drury Lane Theatre in sight from our front, and Covent Garden from our back windows.' This congenial position atoned for the final severance of their connection with their earliest home. The 'divine plain face' of the actress Fanny Kelly began to fill Lamb's thoughts. Apart from the romance of his boyhood, and an attraction, commemorated in the touching lyric *Hester*, to the unknown quakeress Hester Savory, during his life at Pentonville, his mind had been singularly free from thoughts of love. In July 1819, he proposed marriage to Miss Kelly in a letter of great beauty and dignity of feeling; she refused him with equal candour and respect, and he bore his disappointment with exemplary fortitude.

The collected *Works of Charles Lamb*, dedicated to Coleridge and containing *John Woodvil*, *Mr H——*, *Rosamund Gray*, a collection of poems and sonnets and such essays as he thought worthy of republication, was published in two volumes by the brothers Ollier in 1818[1]. From the date of the publication of these volumes until August 1820, Lamb wrote with some regularity for *The Examiner* and, after its decease, for *The Indicator*, also edited by Leigh Hunt. To this same period belong kindly reviews of two books of verse by friends, the *Nugae Canorae* of Charles Lloyd and Barron Field's *First Fruits of Australian Poetry*, both in *The Examiner*, and a review of Keats's *Lamia* and its companion pieces. Barron Field, the companion of the Lambs in their excursion to Mackery End, had gone to New South Wales as chief judge of the supreme court. Of the two poems which Field printed for private circulation, the first was characterised by Lamb as containing too much evidence of the unlicensed borrowing which had helped to colonise Botany bay. To the second, *The Kangaroo,* which he quoted at length, he gave more praise: he was 'mistaken, if it does not relish of the graceful hyperboles of the elder writers'—a perhaps excessive compliment, which might be suspected of having a double edge if it had not been repeated less ambiguously at a later date.

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[1] An analysis of their contents will be found in the bibliography to the present chapter.

The London Magazine of August 1820 contained *Recollections of the South-Sea House,* the first of the miscellaneous essays which bore the signature Elia. From October 1820 to the end of 1823, Elia was a regular contributor to this brilliant but short-lived journal. It was a happy thought which led him to seek material for his first essay in his own reminiscences; for it was in the contemplation of these and the weaving of romance into their fabric that he found his true style. He told his publisher, John Taylor, that he adopted the sobriquet Elia out of regard for the feelings of his brother John, still a clerk in the South-Sea house and readily annoyed by trifles. The original Elia was an Italian with literary tastes whom Lamb remembered as a clerk in the service of the company; his death was almost contemporaneous with the borrowing of his name for these essays. Their success was immediate. Lamb was no new writer, and the authorship soon became an open secret; but the charm of the anonymous writer who lavished the treasures of his humour and sympathy easily and confidentially, talking with his readers from a standpoint entirely free from condescension, won its way for its own sake. At the end of 1822, the larger number of the essays were collected for publication in a separate volume. The second series of essays did not appear until 1833, long after Lamb's connection with *The London* had ceased.

From what has been said in the course of this chapter it will be seen that a large portion of Lamb's biography can be written from the essays. His subject was humanity at large, but, in himself, he saw its microcosm. Using his own impressions and recollections as a text for his work, he wrote without a trace of egotism or self-assertion. To himself, he was one of a crowd, sympathising with its most ordinary pleasures and sorrows. His natural humility precluded any consciousness of a mission to teach ; he had not even the ambition to formulate a philosophy of life. Among his friends were reckoned many whose example might have fostered this ambition; but, in dedicating himself to the common duties of daily life, he had learned the lesson of self-effacement and that sanity of outlook which defends its possessor from the misfortune of taking himself too seriously. Subjective though his essays are in the sense that they deal largely with himself and his doings, his personality did not project itself so as to bend everything within its reach into the shape of its idiosyncrasies: it was a receptive surface which reflected the ordinary life of the world, with added light and colour.

Quickly sensitive to the cloud and sunshine of the moods that chased each other across it, Lamb's mind identified itself completely with its subject, and his style is tremulously alive to the smallest variations of the chequered pageant of life. Its prevailing intellectual quality is humour. Few writers, since Shakespeare gave life with equal sympathy to Hamlet and to Falstaff, have understood so fully as Lamb the intertwining of the ludicrous and pathetic elements in human nature. Their apparent opposition was not merely reconciled by him into a complementary relation. He wedded them into close identity; apprehension and sorrow were familiar elements of his own life, but the cheerful genius of laughter was ever ready to recall him to his sense of proportion. His nervous tendency to laugh at a funeral was, in no small degree, the result of his innate sense of contrast. The extravagant side of his humour appears in his inveterate love of punning and in some incidents of his life in which a fastidious critic might hold him guilty of a leaning to horse-play. But he himself disclaimed the reputation of 'a profest joker'; and the humour of *Elia* is an even mixture of tenderness and playfulness. His lighter moods are subdued by an undertone of pathos; where he writes in sadness, a sudden thought sheds a transfiguring gaiety upon his work. 'The tender grace of a day that is dead' fills the essays which deal with his early recollections and suffuses the portraits which they contain. Yet, the lighter side of the subject is not forgotten; his portraits are lively representations of their subjects, as the world, and not only the son, brother, or friend saw them. The mingled affection and amusement with which Lamb regarded George Dyer, and described his misadventure in the canal at Islington, is a conspicuous example of the inseparable union of laughter and pathos in his nature and style.

If, however, tender sentiment plays a large part in his humour, the reputation of the 'gentle Charles' was not to his liking. Pure mischief was as strong in him as sympathy, and, like Ariel, he found pleasure in dazzling his spectators with illusions. It was quite compatible with his genuine respect for Dyer's unworldliness to poke fun at it. Even Coleridge could be reminded that his juvenile harangues may have given as much amusement as admiration to the humourist who listened to them. The wanton love of playing with his reader is constantly exercised in an adroit mixture of fact with fiction. The groundwork of Lamb's reminiscences is habitually true, but there is always an undefinable point at which the superstructure becomes purely imaginary. Dates are altered and the order of incidents reversed. In *Christ's Hospital*, he speaks, for a time, in the accents of Coleridge and in contradiction to his own earlier recollections; but, before the essay is done, he takes a third shape to address the shape which he has just quitted—and all this without the least awkwardness or display of mechanism. Sometimes, Lamb may have had a solid reason for these Protean tricks of fancy; but their chief ground is natural love for make-believe. With the inborn habit of turning reality into romance, he combined the delectable passion for throwing dust in the eyes of the serious person to whom the identity of Elia was of more concern than the matter of his essays.

All this—the wide sympathy, the blending of tears and laughter, the freakishness of Elia—must, by themselves, have given peculiar charm to his style. But its magic is enhanced by its purely literary quality. Lamb's study of the older English authors bred in him that love of quaint turns of phrase and obsolete words which, in writers of less humour, often becomes a disagreeable mannerism. This archaism, however, lending itself well to Lamb's demure type of humour, was no mere decoration, but part and parcel of his style. The language of his favourite authors, closely woven into the texture of his mind, found its way without an effort into his prose, where, transmuted by his alchemy, it was issued under a new and authentic coinage. Quotations abound in the two volumes of *Elia*, and their text, probably, contains many less conspicuous reminiscences of sentences and phrases which have been left unnoticed or unidentified. Whole passages are cast in forms which recall the manner of the early seventeenth-century prose writers. In Sir Thomas Browne, Lamb found the spirit of the past most nearly akin to his own, with its active curiosity as to the mysteries of life and death, and the zest with which its dignity amused itself with trifles. Thus, the solemn cadences and Latinised constructions of *New Year's Eve* and some of the *Popular Fallacies*, a title which at once recalls *Pseudodoxia Epidemica*, are full of echoes of *Hydriotaphia* and *The Garden of Cyrus*. With this ready faculty of imitating the music of the past, Lamb used singular licence in appropriating its actual strains. The act of borrowing a happy phrase that occurred to him unbidden did not involve the necessity of verification. The words in their new context became his own, and the elusiveness with which he cloaked his fortunate thefts is part of his charm. 'What a misfortune,' he wrote to Bernard Barton, 'to have a Lying memory!' This exclamation forms part of an apology, more humourous than rueful, for inventing a quotation from George Fox. If, in this case, his memory played him false, it is equally certain that he indulged now and then in deliberate invention. In *The Two Races of Men*, for example, there are three lines of blank verse for which the inquisitive student will turn with some confidence to the Stewart dramatists and find his trouble unrewarded.

Lamb, with rare good sense, never yielded to the temptation of devoting himself wholly to literature. The India house, whatever drudgery he may have felt in its service, provided him with a welcome mainstay. 'There is corn in Egypt, while there is cash at Leadenhall.' He spent his holidays with Mary, sometimes on the south coast, sometimes with friends at Cambridge and elsewhere. In 1822, they visited Paris, where Talma supped with Lamb, but the exertion proved too much for Mary. In the summer of 1823, they removed from Russell street to a six-roomed cottage in Colebrook row, Islington. The New river, the scene of George Dyer's exploit in the following November, flowed in front of the house: at the back was a garden 'to delight the heart of old Alcinous.' Lamb felt 'like a great Lord, never having had a house before.' This comparative retirement did not mean loss of friends; he felt himself 'oppressed with business all day and Company all night,' and complained of the want of privacy in the first of the short papers contributed to *The New Times* in 1825, under the signature 'Lepus,' the 'hare with many friends.'

The most important of his letters during this period were addressed to Bernard Barton, his correspondence with whom began in September 1822. Barton, a prolific writer of verse which displays sincere emotion and susceptibility to the charm of places, but seldom rises above respectable mediocrity, was clerk in a bank at Woodbridge in Suffolk. He was a quaker, and it might seem that his steady, serious mind had little in common with Lamb's moods of extravagant gaiety. Lamb, however, had a strong admiration for the type of character fostered by quakerism, which, combined with amusement at the rigid business qualities of the sect, is declared in *A Quaker's Meeting* and *Imperfect*

Sympathies, and was expressed in the sombre neatness of the dress which he affected in his mature years. The friendship of 'B. B.' proved a consoling and steadying influence during the trying years when declining health began to tell upon him and the periods of Mary's insanity became longer. Barton, on his side, owed Lamb a debt of gratitude for the advice to keep to his profession instead of devoting himself to literature. Of the two men, Barton was thirteen years the younger; occasionally shocked at his mercurial correspondent's wit, he was evidently receptive—a fact we should hardly infer from his poetry—to Lamb's jests and puns; and Lamb wrote to him with a gusto which would have been impossible had he been scattering his treasures fruitlessly. The short memoir of Barton by his neighbour and son-in-law, Edward FitzGerald, does full justice to his quiet, unostentatious character, his sound judgment and the sincerity of his verse.

Another correspondent of this period was Thomas Allsop, whose long life was spent in the service of an extreme type of radicalism. In the society of men like Allsop, Hazlitt and Hunt, Lamb's wide tolerance led him to condone what his strong practical sense may have condemned. For the radical poets, he had little liking. He met Shelley once and found his voice 'the most obnoxious squeak I ever was tormented with,' and his reflections on Shelley's death, in a hastily written letter to Barron Field, might have been those of one whom the poet's atheism had blinded to his genius. While he enjoyed *The Vision of Judgment* and was angry at the trouble into which Hunt was brought by its publication, he confessed that Byron

> was to me offensive, and I never can make out his great *power*, which his admirers talk of.... He was at best a Satyrist—in any other way he was mean enough. I daresay I do him injustice; but I cannot love him, nor squeeze a tear to his memory.

His association, however, with radicals and free-thinkers was one cause of an expostulation by Southey, who, in 1823, remonstrated in *The Quarterly* with Elia upon the irreligious tone of certain passages in his work and referred incidentally to Hazlitt and Hunt, the bugbears of the conservative review. In *The London Magazine* for October, Elia responded with a long letter to his critic, in which he exposed his wounded feelings and defended the character of his friends. This letter is a vigorous piece of sustained prose; but the dignity of its tone is injured by its personal references to Southey. The laureate, however, was slow to take offence, and his answer to Lamb in a forbearing letter cleared up the misunderstanding. When *The Last Essays of Elia* was published, only the concluding portion of the letter was printed.

This episode is one sign of the change which came over Lamb during the last decade of his life. He was approaching his fiftieth year. Through the greater part of 1824, he suffered from depression and nervous weakness, which led him to refer to himself as Tremulus or Tremebundus. His interest in *The London Magazine* began to decline. His daily work became irksome to him, and, on 29 March 1825, he 'came home for ever' from the India house, 'a freed man.' Out of a pension of £450, £9 a year was kept back as a provision for Mary in case of her survival. The relief and strangeness of his freedom were described in *The Superannuated Man.* 'Mary,' he wrote to Wordsworth, 'wakes every morning with an obscure feeling that some good has happened to us.' To one 'in wasted health and sore spirits,' this 'Hegira, or Flight from Leadenhall' was, at first, an unmixed blessing; but the enforced idleness which it produced was the cause of much mental unhappiness in Lamb's closing years. It was succeeded, in the summer of 1825, by a nervous fever, which afforded a subject for the essay called *The Convalescent.* In company with Allsop and his wife, the Lambs went into lodgings at Enfield during July and August. On his return to Islington, he was again ill, and Mary's reason succumbed to the strain. Nevertheless, 1825 was a productive year, and 1826 saw the appearance of *Popular Fallacies,* which contains some of Lamb's most ingenious, if most artificial, writing. In 1826, he was complaining of his health; his head was 'a ringing Chaos,' and it is evident that he had fears for his sanity. His connection with *The London Magazine* had ceased in 1825, and, in September 1826, he wrote to Barton that he had 'forsworn periodicals,' in some annoyance at Henry Colburn's dilatory treatment of his contributions to *The New Monthly Magazine.* He found some occupation in reading the Garrick plays at the British museum from ten to four daily: the extracts which he made from them were printed in Hone's *Table Book* throughout 1827.

One consolation of these chequered years was the presence in their house of Emma Isola, the orphan daughter of Charles Isola, one of the esquire bedells of the university of Cambridge. They met her during one of their visits to a Cambridge friend, Mrs Paris; she came to them during her holidays from school, and was eventually adopted by them. In 1833, she married Edward Moxon the publisher. Meanwhile, in September 1827, Lamb, who had found a welcome refuge from Islington in his summer visits to Enfield, took a house at Enfield known as Chase side, 'the snuggest, most comfortable house, with every thing most compact and desirable.' He found delight in the neighbourhood of his favourite Hertfordshire and in correspondence with, and occasional visits from, his friends. Bryan Waller Procter, George Darley, Talfourd, Vincent Novello and Henry Crabb Robinson are among those who shared his intimacy at this time, with Walter Wilson, the biographer of Defoe, and others with whom his friendship had ripened during his later residence in London. Occasionally, he went to London to draw his pension. Once, he dined at Talfourd's to meet Wordsworth, always his idol among contemporary poets. He brought home old books, including the works of Aquinas, which he lent to Coleridge in his retirement at Highgate. For some time, Mary had been able to remain at home during her long illnesses, but, for Lamb, these were periods of enforced solitude. In the summer of 1829, he was obliged to send her to Fulham, and he felt lonely and out of spirits. His pity was always for her; of himself, he seldom spoke without a touch of humour to relieve his melancholy. But his anxieties led him, in 1829, to seek lodgings with his neighbours, the Westwoods, 'the Baucis and Baucida of dull Enfield.' Thomas Westwood was a retired haberdasher, a person of some consequence in Enfield, who sang sea-songs at threescore-and-ten and had a single anecdote. With this worthy man, the Lambs remained till May 1833. Their cares, in 1830, were increased by the illness of Emma Isola, at Bury St Edmunds. Lamb, on her recovery, fetched her home; and it was on this journey that he escaped from the conversation of 'a well-inform'd man,' by answering his question, 'What sort of a crop of turnips do you think we shall have this year?' with the delightful retort, 'It depends, I believe, upon boiled legs of mutton.' The alternation between high spirits and despair at Mary's 'deplorable state' is painfully marked in the letters of this period. Westwood's house became, to him, 'a house of pest and age,' and, with the approaching marriage of Emma to Moxon, the situation became unbearable. In May 1833, he made his final move to a cottage in Church street, Edmonton, where a couple named Walden, who took in mental patients, arranged to lodge and board the brother and sister exclusively.

The best of Lamb's prose work written at Enfield appeared, in 1833, in the second volume of *Elia*, which Moxon published. In June 1830, the same publisher had brought out a small volume of his fugitive verse under the title *Album Verses.* Instinctive delicacy of workmanship, sincere pathos and pure and artless emotion, give Lamb a unique place among those poets who, in occasional verse of an unpretentious order, offer, from time to time, a clear and unruffled reflection of 'the light that never was on sea and land.' Alone of his lyrics, *The Old Familiar Faces*, written under severe emotional stress, is immortal; but *Album Verses* contains a number of sonnets and simple lyrics whose charm, less compelling than the poetic prose of *Dream-Children*, nevertheless springs from the same fount of reminiscence and consciousness of the mingled pleasure and pain of mortal joys. His sense of poetic style reaches a climax in the chiming and haunting lines of the sonnet *The Gipsy's Malison.* Less 'curiously and perversely elaborate,' to use his own phrase, are the triplets *In the Album of Lucy Barton* and *In His Own Album*, and the pieces in octosyllabic couplets, in which he was indebted to Marvell and other seventeenth century poets and happily imitated their natural fluency. It is a characteristic of Lamb's humour that he could indulge in doggerel without producing that sense of incongruity which is often the fate of the lighter efforts of the great masters of poetry. Verses like the famous *Going or Gone* do not rise from the merely formal point of view above the plane of Keats's lines on Teignmouth or Oxford; but they are filled with pathos and a sense of the irrevocable, and the union of laughter and tears, conspicuous in *Elia*, is fully achieved in this simple piece of verse.

Lamb's letters from his retirement at Edmonton refer with unabated interest to the chief alleviations of his life—books and pictures. He tells Cary, the translator of Dante, that, with the aid of his translation and Emma's knowledge of Italian, he and his sister have read the *Inferno.* These studies were interrupted by Emma's marriage on 30 July 1833. On the evening of the wedding, Mary was restored to her senses, 'as if by an electrical stroke.' This was merely temporary. Lamb was content to be with her.

> When she is not violent, her rambling chat is better to me than the sense and sanity of this world. Her heart is obscured, not buried; it breaks out occasionally; and one can discern a strong mind struggling with the billows that have gone over it.

Meanwhile, his brotherly devotion had undermined his health, and intemperance was overcoming his shattered nervous system. On this point, it is impossible to dwell too leniently. Lamb's habitual weakness was simply an incident in a life the key-note of which was the abandonment of selfish ease for a path of unusual difficulty, and it neither hardened his heart nor dimmed his intellect. It is probable that the death of Coleridge, in July 1834, was a blow from which he never recovered. On 21 November, he wrote in the album of a London bookseller his famous tribute to the memory of his friend, 'the proof and touchstone of all my cogitations.' 'I grieved then that I could not grieve. But since, I feel how great a part he was of me. His great and dear spirit haunts me.' A month later, while out walking, he fell down and cut his face; erysipelas ensued, and, on 27 December, he died. Mary survived him for thirteen years; she died in 1847, and was buried in the same grave with him in the churchyard at Edmonton.

To the mind which estimates an author by his capacity for sustained masterpieces, the disconnected character of Lamb's writings offers some contrast to their reputation. A bundle of essays, a number of casual lyrics, one or two brief plays, a tale of striking pathos, a few narratives and adaptations of old authors for children and some critical notes on his favourite writers—these constitute the sum of his work. It was an age in which the journalist and essayist flourished, and the essays of Hazlitt contain more solid critical work, while those of De Quincey are more remarkable for their scholarship and for a highly-coloured eloquence the splendour of which faults of taste cannot dim. But, in play of fancy, in susceptibility to the varying shades of human emotion, in a humour which reflects clearly the perpetual irony of life, Lamb is without an equal. His essays, he wrote to John Taylor, 'want no Preface: they are *all Preface.* A Preface is nothing but a talk with the reader; and they do nothing else.' Through them shines the spirit of the man, alive to the absurdities of the world, tender to its sorrows, tolerant to its weaknesses. He courts the friendship, not the veneration, of his readers: he looks to them, not as disciples, but as fellow-men. By the candid revelation of himself in his essays and letters, by the light which they throw upon a union of heart and life between brother and sister unexampled in literature, he has won the affection of countless readers, even of those who have little care for the beauties of literary style. To all of these, the love and confidence which the Lambs inspired among their friends is still a living thing, and they can read with a sense of personal possession the touching words which Coleridge, at the end of a friendship of fifty years, inscribed in the margin of the poem written during a visit which Lamb paid to Stowey, 'Charles and Mary Lamb, dear to me as my heart, yea as it were my heart.'

CHAPTER IX

THE LANDORS, LEIGH HUNT, DE QUINCEY

THE three writers who form the main subject of this chapter when regarded individually, may seem, at first sight, to have extremely little in common, except their date, the unusual length of time during which they were contemporaries and the closely connected fact that they survived all the greater men, and most of the smaller, of their own generation. But, when they come to be considered more narrowly and from the standpoint of strictly historical criticism, points of resemblance, or of that contrast which is often almost as much of a bond as resemblance for the purposes of such treatment, will rapidly emerge; and the advantage of treating them otherwise than as by three entirely disjoined articles in a dictionary will emerge likewise.

Two of them were ambidextrous in respect of the harmonies of written speech—employing prose and verse with equal facility, though not, in both cases, in equal measure. De Quincey was a prose-writer only—at least, his verse is small in quantity and quite unimportant in quality; though he had the weakness to hint[1] that, an he would, he could have versed it with the best of them. But he had another cross-connection with Landor (this time Leigh Hunt stood out), that both were elaborate and deliberate writers of the most ornate prose that English had known since the seventeenth century. Leigh Hunt and De Quincey—again to cross the ties—were both eminent examples of 'the man-of-letters-of-all-work,' who, arising in the late seventeenth, and earlier eighteenth, century, had been promoted quite out of Grub street early in the nineteenth. Landor's circumstances, ill as he managed them, precluded him from following this occupation of necessity; and this was fortunate, for, otherwise, the cook whose legendary body crushed the violet bed at Florence would have found more hapless fellows in the persons of many editors on the harder couches of Fleet street and Paternoster row. But, except in this ticklish point, he had all the *ethos* of the 'polygraph.' No special subject shows itself as exercising obsession, or receiving preference, in the vast exuberance of his *Poems* and *Conversations* and *Miscellanies*, except a strong tendency towards that criticism which is ever dominant, if not predominant, in the others. Even his classicism is a thing more of manner than of subject; and, though he shows it often in subject also, that is mainly because the one is germane to the other. Now, this polygraphic tendency is an essential characteristic of the new age.

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[1] *Autobiography*, chap. VII (vol. XIV, p. 197 in the 16 vol. edn of 1862).

Yet, further, though we may here enter on more disputable matter, the three resemble each other in a characteristic difficult to formulate without making the field of dispute larger than it strictly should be. Although they all had talent—amounting, in Landor certainly, in De Quincey arguably, in Hunt scarcely, to genius—few critics accustomed to the taking of wide comparative views would put them in the first rank, absolutely, of their contemporaries. The mention of the names of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott, Byron, Shelley, Keats, at once, if it does not dwarf, lessens them, though, perhaps, some would deny this in the case of Landor. Even Southey, who, no doubt, in many, if not most, judgments is regarded as the dark star of the new pleiad, is, in popular language, 'a bigger man' than Leigh Hunt or De Quincey, though there may be individual things by De Quincey certainly, by Hunt perhaps, which Southey could not have done. Even Landor himself (who, be it remembered, though not much given to modesty, thought Southey at least his own equal) becomes artificial, academic, restricted to exquisite construction of sometimes rather lifeless form, beside his friend. Yet, if still keeping an eye on these general similarities and differences, we turn to more individual treatment, we shall find, if not primacy in them as wholes, such accomplishment in particulars and such distinction as, in some literatures, would make them actually supreme and, even in ours, assure them minor supremacies in detail.

Biography, almost always unnecessary here, is, in this special place, almost wholly negligible; and this is fortunate because, while nothing really important happened to any of them, all three are surrounded with a sort of anti-halo of gossip which it would be most unprofitable to discuss. Whether Landor was wholly or only partly Boythorn; whether Hunt was wholly, partly or not at all Skimpole; whether the former's dignity was really dignified or a mixture of the grandiose and the childish; whether Hunt, again, was 'a noble fellow' or, at best, a good-natured Bohemian; whether De Quincey was an acute observer merely or a venomous carper on one side of his character, a deliberate mystifier or even falsifier of fact or a person with a marvellous gift for translating reality into romance on the other—these, and not a few more, are points upon which it is impossible for us to dilate. The reader whose curiosity is excited will find no difficulty, with the aid of the bibliography, in satisfying, and, perhaps, satiating, himself with accounts and discussions of the facts. He will also, one dare say, discover, later if not sooner, that the discussion, in almost every case, has very little to do with the literary appreciation of the exceedingly voluminous contributions added by them to English literature, which contain not a few instances of its finest work, which, in some cases, have exercised remarkable influence and which, though complete exploration of them is, in some cases, not easy, will never be explored by any affectionate and competent student of that literature without the discovery of treasures such as a student will revisit again and again.

The lack of ease just glanced at requires, even with the assistance of the bibliography itself, a few remarks. It exists least in the case of Landor, though, even in his case, the fullest collection—Forster's—is not quite complete and has not been for some time past very easy to obtain. It appears, however, to include all that is indispensable, though some additions recently made by Mr Stephen Wheeler are almost of importance, and amply provided with interest. With De Quincey, matters become, if not more recondite (for some of Landor's work seems almost inaccessible in the original editions), more complicated. To the completest edition of his collected works, by the late professor Masson, at least seven volumes of *Miscellanea*, printed since in different forms and shapes, have to be added; while his eccentric habit of leaving deposits of unpublished writing in his various abodes (sometimes merely lodgings) makes the discovery of yet more not very unlikely.

But Leigh Hunt's is the worst case of all. No attempt even at a complete edition has ever been made; and it may be doubted whether the materials for one exist together in any library. If the whole were assembled it would probably make a collection of works as large, at least, as that of Voltaire. For Hunt, though, as has been said, a good deal of a Bohemian, had little or nothing of the idleness ascribed to the citizens of the spiritual Prague; and, if he had not the knack of managing or keeping money, was untiring in his efforts to earn it, though he does not seem, like De Quincey, to have written for the sake of writing, whether 'hunger and request of friends' pressed or not.

But these inconveniences, though they exist, are not really so important as they may appear. In all three cases, the additions made from time to time to what may be called the working *textus receptus* have thrown very little new light on the general literary character of the authors; and that character, in two cases (Landor's and De Quincey's), is so clearly and deeply stamped, in the other (Leigh Hunt's) diffused in a manner so light but pervading and fully perceptible, that even the most bountiful 'windfall of the muses' possible now, though it might give additional pleasure, would hardly give new pleasure and would pretty certainly add nothing to our critical instruction. Let us, therefore, take them in order, directing the main survey on the individuals so as to prevent dispersion and confusion of view, but utilising whatever lights of community and comparison may present themselves.

The two points which a careful student of Landor will soon discover for himself, are that singular ambidexterity in verse and prose already referred to, possessed by him in measure and manner utterly different from the fashion and degree in which it was possessed by Hunt, and, secondly, the equally unparalleled but much stranger fashion in which 'classic' and 'romantic' tendencies and characteristics were combined in him. Until these two points are independently reached by the student, or unless he consents to take them on trust till he has confirmed them by his own study, there is constant danger of misapprehension; and from that misapprehension some enthusiastic and otherwise valuable studies of him have not been free. The two propositions themselves require careful handling. Landor has been already contrasted with Hunt as to the special character of their joint addiction to prose and verse; but, in this particular respect, they are too far asunder for contrast to be anything but a contrast. Except a certain easy fluency which sometimes runs close to the undistinguished, if not to the distinctly slipshod, there is not much kinship between Hunt's style in prose and his style in verse. In some other poets who have also been great prose-writers there might even be said to have been a broad difference between their verse and their prose style, such as may be found in instances so different in themselves as Dryden and Matthew Arnold. Moreover, the styles and dictions of verse and prose have always, in English, been strongly contrasted; it is the case even in a writer like Wordsworth, who held theories adverse to such a contrast. But Landor's prose and Landor's verse are so strangely allied that there is practically nothing save the presence or absence of metre which distinguishes them, though, reversing the usual practice with his usual self-will, the prose diction and the prose imagery are sometimes more 'flowery and starry' than those of the verse. This is a real idiosyncrasy; and it can hardly be matched except in a language and literature which, oddly enough, Landor detested above all others—in French. And, even there—even in Voltaire and Victor Hugo, great as the likeness of their prose and their verse is in each of two cases which differ much from each other—the identity of the two manners is not so great as in Landor.

He stands almost, but not quite, equally alone in his strange compound (for it is a real chemical compound, not a mere mechanical mixture) of classic and romantic. The names of Spenser, Milton, Gray, Matthew Arnold again and Swinburne, may rise to some lips by way of objection; but, in all cases, when they are examined, the elements will be found more separate than in Landor. He would himself probably have disliked—have, indeed, disclaimed, in his most Boythornian vein—any sympathy with romanticism. He boasted his indifference to Spenser himself; of his own contemporaries, he preferred Southey, who, in some ways, though not in all, was the least romantic of them. But it is what a man does, not what he says, that, in the higher courts of criticism, 'may be used against him.' That Landor's scholarship, except as regards his remarkable faculty of writing Latin verse, was not very deep or very wide, has long been known. Despite his fondness for Greek subjects, and the magical air of Hellenic quality which he has managed to throw over his treatment of them, it is admitted that, at one time, he was rather ignorant of Greek literature, and at no time thoroughly familiar with it, though he caught a good deal of it through Latin, with which he was thoroughly familiar, and of which some acute judges have found more real flavour in him than of Greek. But the important point for us at the moment is that, wold he nold he, this assumption of a classical garb, this selection of classical subjects, even this attempt to create and to diffuse a classical atmosphere, were all subtly conditioned by an underlying romantic influence which was of the age as well as of the man and which he could not resist. Except in a few of what may be justly called his epigrams, in the proper original sense, he never shows classical restraint in expression—even his avowed efforts to 'unload' and 'cut out' frequently result in an obscure concentration and compression of 'beauties' rather than in classical conciseness and perspicuity combined. It is impossible to imagine anything more inconsistent with even the laxest classical conception of an epic than *Gebir* or any less Aristotelian drama than *Count Julian.* The only classical form which *Imaginary Conversations,* whether in verse or prose, suggest, is that ambiguous and, unfortunately, only in small part extant department the mime; while the elaborate and beautiful descriptions in prose recall only the very late and, to some extent, degenerate *ecphrases*[1] of Greek rhetoricians and romancers. The famous lines of Swinburne,

> And through the trumpet of a child of Rome
> Rang the pure music of the flutes of Greece,

are absolutely critical as regards the Romanising of the Hellenic in Landor; but exception might be taken, in no cavilling spirit, to the epithet 'pure.' The music was singularly blended—a mixed mode of Greek and Roman and modern—and though, perhaps, the musician's efforts were always or often consciously directed towards keeping down the modern element, he frequently failed, and sometimes, when he came nearest to success, succeeded only in artifice or variability. Still, as has been said, there is no one exactly like him or even very near to him in this blended character; and its results, at their happiest, were such as even English literature could not afford to lose.

Although, to the general reader, Landor, if he is anything at all, is a writer of prose, his poetical work deserves to be considered first, for more reasons than that of the general priority of verse. This, though, in later days, he affected to regard it as an amusement only, was, to him, a life-long occupation; he only took to prose—he certainly only published it—in middle and later age, and it may be not ungenerously doubted whether despair of gaining the public ear with verse did not induce in him a certain 'turning to the Gentiles' with prose. Although the bulk of his verse is almost necessarily less than that of his prose, it is very considerable; and may run, at a rough guess, to between forty and fifty thousand lines. The kinds of it are also sufficiently, if not extremely, various, ranging from the already mentioned epic and closet-drama through dialogues of a less and less theatrically dramatic kind, idylls with some conversation in them, and idylls purely narrative to an immense multitude—hundreds and almost thousands—of shorter pieces; epigrams, sometimes in the modern, but nearly always in the Greek, sense, of all lengths and in a variety of metres, though Landor moulded his practice to his own mistaken theory of the comparative poverty of English in this respect and seldom tried, while he still more seldom succeeded in, anything which had not an iambic or trochaic base.

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[1] The *ἔκφρασις*, or set description, is one of the most characteristic features of late Greek work.

The smallness of the audience which *Gebir* obtained at its first appearance was celebrated in a fashion humourous, but, as was his wont, rather over-laboured, by a contemporary and companion in the present chapter. De Quincey pretended to pride himself upon being 'a mono-Gebirist,' meaning, thereby, not (as stricter analogy would require) 'a reader of *Gebir* only' but 'the only reader of *Gebir*[1].' This, of course, was an exaggeration; but it is certain that the poem was the very reverse of popular, though one very beautiful conceit—the fancy about the sea-shell remembering and repeating the music of the waves—found fairly early recognition and has long been familiar to thousands who never read another line of the poem. It contains, however, other passages as fine, or even, except sentimentally, finer, such as the magnificent distich:

> And the long moonbeam on the hard wet sand
> Lay, like a jasper column half up-reared.

But this most classical of our poets has incurred the very curse which a successor in classicism pronounced on modernity. *Gebir* has numerous beautiful passages[2], still more numerous beautiful lines and phrases. But it is strangely destitute of interest either of story or of character, and such action as it has is evolved neither with epic nor with dramatic skill. The versification and the diction both aim at a Miltonic stateliness and sometimes achieve it; but there are false notes in the phrase, if not in the verse, of which Milton never could have been guilty; and the verse itself has a monotony which it is one of Milton's greatest triumphs to have avoided. The most complimentary comparison that can be borrowed from the other arts for it is that of a bas-relief, worked with no small sculpturesque art, dignified in conception and execution, even heightened, here and there, with gold and colours, but producing, on the whole, an effect lifeless, bloodless and wanting in charm as well as, in parts, indistinct and confused.

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[1] He admitted that Southey had been another, but the only other, member of the sect. It was characteristic of Landor himself, for all his affected preference for few admirers, to be seriously nettled at De Quincey's joke.

[2] The author, in his curious *forfanterie*, probably intended it to be supposed that there were many more in the 'loads [he] carted off to give it proportion.' Yet, to Southey, to whom he 'showed off' less frequently than to most, he admitted that he had 'boiled away too much.'

Landor called the very large body of verse of dramatic form which he published—a body filling nearly four hundred pages of between forty and fifty lines each—*Acts and Scenes*, expressly noting that 'none of them were offered to the stage, being no better than *Imaginary Conversations* in metre.' There is, however, a very marked difference between the first, the already mentioned *Count Julian*, and the rest of them. *Count Julian* is not easily distinguishable from the dramas—of the closet kind, but very frequently offered to the stage in Landor's time—which are noticed in other parts of this work, such dramas as those even of Coleridge and, still more, of Talfourd and Taylor, of Milman and Darley. Its acts are the regular five, its action is conducted in the usual stage manner and its style and diction conform to the somewhat artificial stateliness which, though discarding the worst eighteenth century 'stage lingo,' remained, and, to some extent, still remains, the orthodox speech of tragedy. It is somewhat less artificial in style than *Gebir*; and the enforced, though minimised, action of a drama frees it, to a certain extent, from the deadly-liveliness of the epic. But, on the whole, it reminds one, as plays of its class often do, of Sainte-Beuve's polite but fatal verdict on *Don Garcie de Navarre*, Molière's one effort in alien kind. It is an *essai pâle et noble*; but little, if anything, more. Being Landor's, it could not but contain some passages of fine blank verse. But here, with, perhaps, one exception, it is far below *Gebir*; while even the advantages of drama do not suffice to give it real liveliness of action. The points of the situations are not taken; the characters are not worked out and, by the strangest mistake of all, 'the tragic frailties,' the great secret in which Aristotle's principles and Shakespeare's practice agree, Covilla's[1] disgrace and Julian's treason are, as it were, 'previous questions'—over and done before the play begins.

The fact simply is that the modern and romantic touch in Landor made him unequal either to formal epic or to formal drama. He wanted the loose movement, the more 'accidented' situations, the full, and sometimes almost irrelevant, talk, the subsidiary interest of description and other things of the kind, to enable him to be something more than 'pale and noble.' In the great bulk of *Acts and Scenes*, and especially in the long and important one which comes next (in his *Works*, though not in time) to *Count Julian*, *Andrea of Hungary*, as well as, though to a slightly less degree, in its sequels, which complete the trilogy on Giovanna of Naples, he has provided himself liberally with all these things. The three pieces, which together extend to a hundred and forty of the large pages above referred to, are much more than 'imaginary conversations in metre'; they form, in fact, a historical novel, thrown into conversational dramatic form with all the redundances of the novel as they may seem from the dramatic point of view. Sometimes, the treatment approaches more nearly to the fashion of an actable play scene; sometimes, to that of a chapter of Scott or Dumas turned into verse and put in action instead of narration. And this hybrid character is maintained, almost continuously, in the pieces that follow: more than a dozen in number, though always shorter, and sometimes much shorter, than the Neapolitan set. The merits and defects of the form, and its instances, as well as a still more interesting subject, the relative merit of the prose and verse, will be better discussed when we come to the prose itself. It may be enough to say here that, in this new handling, Landor at last discovers the source of that interest which he had failed to attain in *Gebir* and *Count Julian*.

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[1] Landor's name for Roderick's victim, usually called Florinda. It should be noticed as a caution most necessary for readers that the chronological order of Landor's *Poems* is very different from that of their places in Forster's edition. The Neapolitan trilogy, for instance, now to be noticed, was written twenty-four years after *Count Julian*. But Landor's competence in writing, if not in conduct, lasted unusually late; and the maintenance of his literary powers is one of his numerous extraordinary points.

It may be matter for question whether this interest is equally maintained in his more numerous but, both as individuals and in the mass, less bulky *Hellenics*, of which there are some fifty, spread, in point of composition, over a large part of his life. They were above called idylls, and, according to Greek practice, they strictly deserve the name. As such, they are entitled to use or disuse the dramatic or, at least, the dialogic form at pleasure; and they avail themselves of the privilege. Thus, one of the best known, *Coresus and Callirrhoe*, is a continuous narrative; another, *Menelaus and Helen*, has both dialogue and action.

There is no doubt, however, that, except to very peculiar, and, perhaps, rather factitious, taste, there is something wanting in these longer poetical works by Landor. They excite esteem very commonly, except when he tries humour or argument; satisfaction and admiration, sometimes; transport, hardly ever save by occasional flashes, mostly of mere description. It was, perhaps, much for

Landor to condescend to the admission that his 'Cenci' scenes do not challenge comparison with Shelley's 'noble tragedy'; but the comparison forces itself all the more unfortunately, while the preface in which it occurs closes with a piece of that miss-fire irony of which Landor was unluckily prodigal. In reading *Acts and Scenes* and *Hellenics*, one finds, and in re-reading them one expects, hardly any 'jewels five words long.' A few pieces of the beautiful elaborate, but too often lifeless, description which finds a better home in the prose occur; but nothing (if it be not rash to judge so positively of so wide a field) equal to the best things in *Gebir*. The situations are often—in fact, usually—well selected; the composition, both in the lower and the higher senses of that word in different arts, is frequently admirable, the execution correct and creditable; but the total effect is too often cold[1]. It is not that Landor is by any means a stickler for what is commonly called propriety. His situations are not seldom of the luscious kind, and, though never guilty of coarseness, he is occasionally chargeable with innuendo. But, in aiming at passion, he too often only attains sentiment. The feeling may be there; in some cases, it certainly is; but it is too often birth-strangled in the expression, partly by an attempt at classical restraint, which, as pointed out above, is not really natural to the writer, and partly by the singular verbosity also glanced at, which, in a way, is the 'escapement' and compensation for this restraint. There are comparatively few of Landor's longer pieces in which he does not, as it were, hold overflow meetings—which he addresses partly with repetitions and partly with ekings of what he has said before[2].

The advantage, to such a poet, of shorter and, in some cases, definitely limited forms can hardly be over-estimated; and it is enhanced not merely by that blend of classic and romantic which has been noticed, but by a further blend—to some extent consequential—of eighteenth and nineteenth century touch which is more noticeable in Landor than in almost any of his companions. They, for the most part—even Wordsworth, even Scott—grew out of one strain into the other; Landor kept the mixture. He is thus able, in his best so-called epigrams and elsewhere, to observe the neatness and clear outline of eighteenth century occasional pieces, while suffusing it with the later colour and diffusing over it the later atmosphere. A little piece, which comes quite early in the collection of 1846 and which was probably written nearly half a century earlier, for it is one of the *Ianthe* poems,

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[1] The very best of the exceptions is, perhaps, the beautiful and almost wellknown *Hamadryad*, which is faultless throughout and contains one of Landor's very finest single lines,

> And the axe shone behind him in their eyes,

where picture, sound and hidden, as well as obvious, meaning are marvellously combined.

[2] In fact, to use his own words against him (see above p. 210, note 2), if, in *Gebir*, he had 'boiled away too much,' he certainly, in some of these pieces, 'boiled away too little.'

> Pleasure, why thus desert the heart,

exhibits this combination remarkably; while it has much to do with the extraordinary charm of the two little masterpieces *Rose Aylmer* and *Dirce.* But, through all these mote-like poems and poemlets, the total number of which comes not so very far short of a thousand, though there may be triviality, false wit, dulness and other faults here and there, there is always the chance of coming across that flash and glow of the opal which Landor has in a special manner and measure, which is the dearest of delights to true lovers of poetry and over which he retained command, in these short pieces, almost to his death. Some, even of these pieces, such as *Gunlaug* (an early attempt) and *Guidone and Lucia,* may almost be called long, running to five hundred lines or so; and there are numerous pages which only just, or do not quite, suffice for a poem. But the scale runs down to single couplets, even single lines, and a greater number of the constituents does not exceed from half a score to a score of lines. Here, the drawbacks of Landor's larger pieces, to a great extent, disappear. A considerable number of these smaller pieces are, of course, trivial; but their smallness makes the triviality at once apparent, and they can be passed over without the disappointed and disappointing labour which the conscientious reader of a longer piece undergoes. The miniature jewels above referred to, the larger but almost throughout admirable odes to Wordsworth and Southey, a positive majority of the *Ianthe* pieces (which would deserve isolation in a separate but complete sheaf, for they have a distinctive quality rare in the vast harvest of love poetry), the Browning sonnet, still, perhaps, the best thing on its subject and in its kind after seventy years, are all consummate; and there are many to add. To the last, in *Dry Sticks,* he retained that strange occasional command of perfect phrase which was his special merit and privilege, and of which almost his greatest single example is the famous

> Beyond the arrows, views and shouts of men

in *Count Julian.*

Seldom or never on pages facing each other in the published work of a man between eighty and ninety can one find two such opposed pieces as the admirable monostich of *A Sensible Girl's Reply to Moore's "Our couch shall be roses all spangled with dew"*

> It would give me rheumatics: and so it would you

(the best joke as well as one of the last that he ever made), and the contrast:

> Ah Southey, how we stumble on through life
> *Among the broken images of dreams*
> Not one of them to be raised up again.

Yet it must have been later still, so far as the time of composition went, that he wrote *Rose the Third* and other beautiful things. In fact, selections from Landor have not, perhaps, even yet done full justice to his poetry; though there is hardly any poet who requires selection so much.

It is, however, undoubtedly, as a writer of prose that Landor is most generally known, so far as he can be said to be generally known at all; and it was in prose that the most copious and individual products of his genius were supplied even to his most critical admirers. *Imaginary Conversations* did not begin to be published[1] till he was past the middle of his unusually long life; but he was untiring in the production of them to the very last, and their bulk is very considerable indeed, especially if we include *Pericles and Aspasia* and *The Pentameron* of right and *The Citation and Examination of Shakespeare* of grace. Their subjects are of the most varied nature possible—ranging from Greek to actually contemporary matters, and Landor, at least, endeavours to make the treatments as various. It has been pointed out already that his verse *Acts and Scenes* have much of the character of verse-novels, and, in *Imaginary Conversations*, which include a good deal of action as well as conversation, the absence of the restraints of verse is accompanied naturally enough by a still wider expatiation in both speech and incident. The result very often, if not always, gives the same restoration of interest which has been already noticed. Tragedy and comedy, history and imagination, scenery and sentiment, all are made to come in, and, to enhance the attraction, Landor endeavours, after a fashion which, indeed, had been essayed by others, especially by De Quincey in *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, to throw over large parts of his work a charm of elaborate prose style emulating the most ambitious efforts of the poet. In poetry itself, he had been almost rigidly eighteenth century in form if not quite in diction. He had actually deprecated, in his correspondence with Southey, the adoption of any but familiar and consecrated metrical forms, not merely as regarded exotic and archaic devices, classical metres, and so forth, but even as concerned new stanza-combinations of already recognised line-forms. But, in prose, he summoned to his aid every device of rhythm, colour, word-value, sound-concert and other helps that rhetoric and prosody itself, used in the most general way, could give him. There was no longer, as in his verse, any effort to 'boil away,' to 'cart off loads' of matter likely to be attractive to the general: there was, on the other hand, evident effort to 'let everything go in,' to 'load every rift with ore.'

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[1] He had tried something of the kind once or twice earlier; but the 'crystallising touch' seems to have been given by a casual observation in one of Southey's letters as to his own *Colloquies*.

The effect, from the point of view last suggested especially, was a triumphant success, except in the eyes of those who, reversing Landor's position, held, as to prose, the same views which he held as to verse, and disliked lavish and gorgeous ornament in it. More beautiful things—from the famous 'dreams' which sometimes fill pages, to the little phrases, clauses and passages which occur constantly—are not to be found in literature, ancient or modern, English or foreign. Some have gone so far as to insist that there are none so beautiful; a position which a critic whose memory is fairly full and his judgment fairly catholic will be slow to accept, and which is itself, perhaps, essentially uncritical. In their own way, they are perfect, and that is enough.

When, however, we leave this charming quality of style, it is not so easy to keep to the path of simple eulogy. There are few more curious instances of difference of opinion in the history of literary criticism, though it shows many such, than the varying estimates of Landor's humour. There are those, sometimes men of renown, who find it 'exquisite'; there are others, not perhaps by any means very limited in their appreciation of this elusive but important quality, who are seldom, if ever, able to enjoy it at all—who think it, from *The Citation and Examination of Shakespeare* down to the conversation entitled *The Duke de Richelieu, Sir Firebrace Cotes, Lady G. and Mr Normanby*, the most depressing exhibition that ever a man of genius made of himself, to whom it seems forced, trivial, at best schoolboyish, at worst almost, if not quite, vulgar. Appreciation of his sentiment does not, perhaps, swing the pendulum through so enormous an arc, but it occupies a sufficiently wide one in its variety, as may be seen from the fact that what some of his greatest admirers call 'girlish,' others, no less enthusiastic on the whole, style 'missish,' a difference slight in word, formidable in sense. Few, even of these partisans, have ranked his reasoning powers high, and still fewer, even of those who, in a way, sympathise with him politically, have shown much eagerness to accept him as a mouthpiece of their own political views. He seems—and this is one of the legacies of the century of his birth, to have spoken of religious and ecclesiastical matters without the slightest real conception of what these matters mean; and, in his miscellaneous utterances, especially on contemporary subjects, there is a perpetual atmosphere of 'fling,' through which the missiles dart and hurtle as if from a dozen different quarters at once, with a result which recalls all attributes of chaos—noise, darkness, confusion. The escapes from this—in themselves not always quite continuous—provided by *Pericles and Aspasia*, by the Boccaccio and Petrarca pieces, *Euthymedes* and, fortunately, not a few others, may, perhaps, acquire an additional character of paradises from their association with this Tartarus or Limbo; but the critical historical estimate can hardly neglect the latter. There is probably no part of Landor's work, not even the long poems, which has been less read than his chiefly critical miscellanies in prose; and, though the general reader, perhaps, is not to be blamed for his neglect, the student will not pass them by except to his great loss. It is true that nowhere does that uncritical quality which accompanies Landor when he is most critical more distinctly appear, whether it be in more general matters, such as his spelling reform crotchet, or in direct comment on individual books and authors. But, just as in *Poems* and *Conversations* you are never without hope and seldom without satisfaction of beauty, so, here, you need never despair of luminous flashes of critical utterance. In short, you are driven to say that while there is hardly in the whole of literature an author so difficult to read through without constant dissatisfaction, so there is none whom it is so necessary to read through in order to judge him fairly and enjoy him intelligently.

The result of such a reading to those who look first to form and expression can hardly but be satisfactory; to those who look no further, if there be any such, few writers can be Landor's rivals. But there is still another split of opinion between his actual admirers as to the positive value of his matter. Some have gone so far—while, of course, admitting the extreme unwisdom of Landor's conduct—as to allow his literary work, when not expressive of mere irritation, crotchet, or prejudice, the supreme merit of 'wisdom' itself. Some have called him a great thinker, though a feeble reasoner in support of his thoughts; and he has actually been credited with having uttered 'more delicate aphorisms of human nature than anyone except Shakespeare.' It is true that there may have been latent guile in the adjective 'delicate,' covertly, though not openly, narrowing the compliment. Yet, there is no doubt that high intellectual and moral value is attributed to Landor by some. Others, prepared to go almost the furthest lengths possible in admiration of his expression at its best, find it impossible to rank him very high in these other respects. They do not share the vulgar objection to the commonplace and obvious; they know that the greatest things in prose and poetry alike are commonplaces on which the writer has thrown (to use Coleridge's consummate image) the special moonlight or sunlight of his own thought and treatment, thus differentiating and subliming them. But this is what they rarely, if ever, find in Landor. There is exquisite expression, but it is seldom more than the expression, exquisite indeed, but without halo or *aura*, of what may almost be called copy-book truths or drawing-book pictures. He has scores of true, tender, touching, charming things on death and love and youth and age on the one side, and, in his sober moments, not a little commonsense on the other. He has almost always at hand, if not actually present, perfection of expression. But, for acuteness of practical intellect dividing joint and marrow, and shattering fallacy, you will never find in him anything like Johnson's 'You do not know, Sir, that he is guilty till the judge has decided'; nor, for the disclosure of poetic altitudes and abysses, will you find anything like

> We are such stuff
> As dreams are made on, and our little life
> Is rounded with a sleep,

or

> Our noisy years seem moments in the being
> Of the eternal Silence.

Indeed, though Landor lived to receive the homage of Swinburne, his schoolboy walks had taken him past the house where still lingered the daughter of Addison; and, outrageous though the statement may seem, there is still much in him which reminds one more of Pope than of Shakespeare or Wordsworth.

It would be negligent in such a place as the present to take no notice of some, at least, of the opinions which have existed in reference to this remarkable writer. His own more than sufficiently quoted remark (which is, perhaps, not subject to the charge of mixed metaphor sometimes brought against it)[1] has not been quite so exactly fulfilled as is also commonly said; for, in his sense, he 'dined' very early, and the guests, though certainly few, were as certainly select. From Southey's eulogies[2], which were, however, often accompanied by judicious warnings, some deductions must, no doubt, be made. They had entered too early into a quite uncorrupt and very interesting but rather disabling mutual admiration society of practically unlimited liability; and, with some strong differences, there was too great a sympathy between them for perfectly achromatic judgment. 'You and I,' said a very distinguished man of letters of a later generation to one not quite so eminent, 'ought not to review each other.' But Southey was by no means Landor's only admirer, nor were Southey and De Quincey alone in the commendation above referred to; Coleridge, Wordsworth, Byron, Lamb, Shelley, Leigh Hunt, with whatever minor differences, joined in the admiration, and the only first-rate dissident, whose dissent was chequered by not a little eulogy, was the certainly unsurpassed but wayward and somewhat incalculable spirit of Hazlitt. In the middle generation of the nineteenth century 'all the wits were there,' in the same sense, from Tennyson and Browning, Carlyle and Dickens downwards. Later still, the unmeasured laudation of Swinburne and the less exuberant and unqualified but almost as high estimate of Sir Sidney Colvin followed; and there is no sign of much alteration in the youngest opinion. 'For the *vulgus* never: for the *clerus* surely' has been the almost hackneyed but well-justified summary. In such cases, there is always a temptation either to join the chorus or to take the equally easy but even less commendable line of more or less paradoxical disparagement. In the foregoing estimate, a strenuous endeavour, based on long acquaintance and frequently revised impression, has been made to keep the difficult and dangerous middle way of strict criticism.

The quality in Landor which repels, or, at least, fails to attract, some readers, except from the side of pure form, was well, if almost accidentally, pointed out by a critic hardly professional, at least as regards English literature, but exceptionally scholarly, and not in the least given to carping—the late Lewis Campbell, who complained of his 'aloofness and unreality.' It is only in the *apices* of his poetry, such as *Rose Aylmer* and in a few passages of his prose, such as the purple passages of the 'dreams,' the scholar episode of *The Citation and Examination of Shakespeare* and a few others, where these peculiarities are overcome by genuine passion[1] or, in one way or another, positively suit the subject, that Landor escapes a certain artificiality. Another very happy phrase of Campbell, applied to Landor's friend Dickens[2], emphatically does not apply, except on these rarest occasions, to Landor himself. His characters are never exactly 'human effluences,' they are effluences of books and of a fantastic individual combination of scholarly taste and wilful temperament. His aloofness is not the poetic aloofness which Matthew Arnold adumbrates in the famous passage of *Resignation*—a critical but, at the same time, sympathetic contemplativeness—for, except in relation to literature, and even largely as to that, he is nothing if not *un*critical ; while even his sympathies, which are often keen, are so twisted and tossed by whims and crazes and crotchets of all kinds that they are never to be depended on. That his humour is even more uncertain has been said already. When any lover of style and form remembers not merely his great show pieces but the smaller patches—the 'stripes of purple,' as Quintilian would say, woven into all the prose, and not sparingly scattered over the verse—he is apt to pronounce Landor one of the mightiest of magicians; and so, at these times, he is. But he is a Prospero with a most imperfect and intermittent command over his Ariel, and, perhaps, always better suited to uttermost isles of fancy than to the Milans of the actual world.

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[1] 'I shall dine late but the room will be well lighted and the guests few but select.'

[2] It is rather unfortunate that the complete correspondence between the two has never been published. Forster supplied not a few of the lacunae in Cuthbert Southey's and J. W. Warter's collections but left much out or gave it only in summary; and, even had he been more liberal, the *disjecta membra* of the three storehouses would have been hard to put together.

Yet, if Landor only occasionally escaped the charge of being an insufficient Prospero, the title 'Ariel of criticism,' which has actually been applied to Leigh Hunt, is far more unfortunate. This excess of honour seems to have been suggested by a certain lightness (which he undoubtedly possessed, but which is an ambiguous term) and by his unquestionable habit of flitting from subject to subject. But Hunt, in more ways than one, was by no means a 'delicate' spirit, if he was a spirit at all, and he was frequently trivial, which Ariel never was. He had, however, gifts much above those of the average man-of-letters-of-all-work to whose class he undoubtedly belongs; he managed to do some things, both in verse and in prose, which have a curious attraction in their own way; he was a great benefactor by opening walks of delight in the lower but quite respectable paradises of miscellaneous literature; and, as an origin, or at least a maker of fresh starts, in more than one literary department and fashion, he has historical interest, superior to that possessed by some greater executants, and never, perhaps, yet quite fairly allowed him. To no single man is the praise of having transformed the eighteenth century magazine, or collection of light miscellaneous essays, into its subsequent form due so much as to Hunt. Allowing for the undeniable truth that if a certain thing has to be done, evolutionary fate always finds some one to do it, it may still be said that, without Hunt, *Sketches by Boz* would have been a kind of Melchisedec, and *Household Words* improbable. His very enemies in *Blackwood* owed him royalty a hundred years ago, and it is doubtful whether even the most infallible and self-reliant youth of the twentieth century, when it writes articles of the 'middle' style, and even, sometimes, of the purely critical, is not similarly, though less directly, indebted to Hunt.

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[1] There is such, undoubtedly, in *Essex and Spenser*.

[2] 'Dickens's shreds and patches, if not human beings are human effluences—*ἀπόρροιαι*' (*Memorials of Lewis Campbell*, p. 396).

His influence on pure criticism and on poetry was not very great, but in neither was it negligible. In verse, he had, beyond doubt, the credit of being the first deliberately to desert the stopped decasyllabic couplet which had reigned over the whole eighteenth century and the latter part of the seventeenth, reviving the overrun of the Jacobeans and first Carolines. Keats may not have learnt the change from Hunt only, but from the originals as well; yet this does not lessen Hunt's importance. Hunt himself may have been open to censure in his enjoyment of the revival, but that is another question. In criticism, he has the merit, which Macaulay long ago assigned to him, of a most unusual and, at the time, almost unique catholicity, which was not alloyed (as, to some extent, perhaps, it was in Lamb) by the presence of mere caprice, and (as it still more certainly was in that admirable critic) by a sort of complementary exclusiveness. Hunt could not only like both Spenser and Dryden, both Addison and the great early seventeenth century dramatists, he could also expatiate into those foreign literatures which, at the time (putting aside the new fashion for German), were much less known than they had been. Except Dante, who, for the most part, flew over his head, and who, when he came nearer, brushed, as by wings, Hunt's prejudices in positive religion heavily, it is difficult to name any great, or even good, writer whom he did not, so far as he could, appreciate, and his famous recognition of the greatness of the Beatrice-Joanna and De Flores part of Middleton's *Changeling*, is only the best known of numerous good hits, where others, even Lamb, had missed. Even the prejudices just mentioned did not mislead him to the same extent as that to which they misled others of his contemporaries on both sides, and, here again, he may be said to have been almost more important as an influence than as a practitioner. But his actual practice in all three directions—as poet, as critic and as 'miscellanist'—has merit, and, in the latter two cases, volume, which demand less general and more particular examination.

Hunt's poetical production, considering the length of his life and the fluency of his pen, was not very extensive. When, some dozen years before his death, he was asked or permitted by Moxon to issue his *Poetical Works* in a small pocket volume, he got together rather less than three hundred pages, but closely printed and containing, perhaps, nine or ten thousand lines. It does not, indeed, include one of his very best things—the fine sonnet with at least one magnificent line,

> The laughing queen that caught the world's great hands,

which he wrote in competition with Keats and Shelley and by which he beat both these, his otherwise immeasurable betters. But everything else by which he is best known and to be known is here, *The Story of Rimini*, re-written but by no means improved; *Abou ben Adhem*, which, in the milder form of 'high seriousness,' has few superiors of its scale, and the delightful rondeau, *Jenny kissed me*, of which the same may be said in respect of graceful mixture of sentiment and jest; the unequal but, in part, excellent *Man, Fish and Spirit*, and, perhaps, a few more.

It must, however, be a somewhat exceptional taste or, rather, appetite which would desiderate a larger body of Leigh Hunt's verse. The few things highly praised above are very few, and, taken with their company, they have a singular air of being out of it—of having come there by some caprice of the muses. *Rimini* has the historical value already assigned to it and more; for, besides its versification, it gives other 'patterning' to easy verse-narrative. But the tone of it—if not, as was pretended at the time, immoral—is mawkishly sentimental, the language trivial and slipshod and the whole style what Persius meant by *delumbe* and *in labris natans*. The choice of subject, after Dante, could hardly have been more unfortunate, and Hunt showed the same insensibility to an almost equal danger in choosing that of *Hero and Leander*.

The Palfrey is a pleasant enough variation, in the lighter octosyllable revived by Coleridge and Scott, of the old *fabliau*, and it is, perhaps, unfair to *The Glove* that its triviality should have provoked, and have been exposed by, Browning's opposition piece. But this same triviality is everywhere in Hunt; and, in *The Feast of the Poets* and that *of the Violets* [poetesses], it unfortunately comes very near to vulgarity. It is, however, lifted out of this by the serious purpose of *Captain Sword and Captain Pen.* Some, especially those who share its anti-militarist spirit, have held this to be the best thing for combined quantity and quality that Hunt did in verse. Others differ; not merely antipathetically.

But actual triviality—not mere lightness of subject and treatment as in the pseudo-Anacreon; and in some of the medieval poets, especially Latin; or, again, in Johannes Secundus and Herrick and Prior and Moore and many later poets but—triviality in the proper sense, the triviality of the rags and straws that flit about the common objects of literature, is fatal to poetry; and there is, let it be repeated for the last time, far too much of this in Hunt's verse. It is not absent from his prose; but it is much less essentially fatal there, and, though he has in prose, perhaps, nothing quite so good as the few best things of his verse, he has an immensely larger proportion comparatively, and a very considerable bulk positively, of good and pleasant matter. The abovementioned merit of teaching the miscellaneous essay to cast the once bright and graceful, but now wrinkled, faded and shabby, skin of *The Spectator* form can hardly be exaggerated. He was not so fortunate or so wise in adopting, in common with most of his contemporaries, the abuse of the editorial 'we'—a thing not, indeed, unsuitable to formal, and rather solemn, discussion, but frequently irritating, if not absurd, in light discursive writing. Of this same light discursive writing, however, Hunt was really a master and even—in virtue of his precursorship especially, but not solely—a great master. Nothing is easier than to show that Coleridge, Hazlitt, Lamb, Landor, De Quincey and others, had qualities which Hunt had not; but it may be questioned whether any one of them had quite his faculty—the faculty of the born journalist and book maker—of tackling almost any subject that presented itself in a fairly adequate, and not seldom quite attractive, fashion. He showed it in dozens (literally) of papers and books, from *The Reflector* to *The Old Court Suburb*, the list of his achievements including some remarkable *tours de force* such as that *New Tatler* which he wrote single-handed for some eighteen months. It is, again, easy to say that of this facile, gossipy, superficial way of writing we have had enough and too much; that it underlies Ben Jonson's sentence on its first examples three hundred years ago as being a 'flashy thing'; that the two hundred years which saw comparatively little of it were happier than the succeeding hundred which has seen a great deal. Yet it is certain that, as Hunt restarted and refashioned the style, it has done very little harm. It has, perhaps, done some good; and, beyond all question, it has brought about a good deal of not disgraceful pleasure. The man whose name can be put in such a sentence deserves that the sentence should be recorded in history.

The singular mixture of merits and defects which has made it necessary to tread the critical middle way with special care in the case of the two preceding writers extends, also, to the third. With De Quincey, indeed, we return to a higher general level than that to which we have had to descend in order to consider Leigh Hunt. Yet, though even Hunt's poetical altitudes are not of the highest or loneliest, the things which have been referred to make him a poet, if not a great poet, for moments; while De Quincey not only never accomplished poetry but, as was noticed in the earlier part of this chapter, indulged in something perilously like blasphemy of it. For, to say that you might have been such a poet as your neighbours when those neighbours are such as were De Quincey's, and that you did not choose to be, comes perilously near the unforgivable. But his prose soars into regions which Hunt could never have reached so far as form goes; while its matter, with inequalities, again perilous, in some respects, keeps an altogether higher level of intellect, scholarship, taste and so forth, than Hunt's pleasant chatter could attain. But De Quincey's literary history, so far as public acknowledgment goes, has been curious and contrasts rather remarkably with that of his two fellows here. Beginning distinctly late, *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* gave him, with all good judges, a very high position which he never wholly lost. But he did not follow it up with any substantive work; for some time, he wrote hardly anything, and scattered what he produced in miscellaneous and, most often, anonymous publications; and, till very near the close of his long life, he held a curious and rather anomalous position as a sort of amateur or freelance hovering on the outskirts of literature and 'picqueering,' as they would have said in Dryden's time, on the subject in brilliant but desultory raids. Not till near the close did he attempt 'collection.'

There are probably not many experienced judges of the ways of the public in regard to literature who would not have been somewhat doubtful as to the success of collection and publication, in an unusually large number of volumes, of articles, scarcely ever connected in subject, dealing, not unfrequently, with matters not obviously popular, spread in composition over a period in which public taste had altered not a little, and pervaded by all sorts of tricks and mannerisms of style and thought. But the 'fifties,' after a period in which criticism had not commanded much favour and in which it had not, perhaps, deserved much, were recovering their appetite for it; and De Quincey, whatever subject he touched, was nothing if not critical, though, as a literary critic of individuals, he was very untrustworthy. Moreover, the frequent presence in his writing of the most elaborately ornamental passages appealed to tastes which he had himself been one of the first to excite, and which had been steadily growing. The scheme—first of a selection in four volumes, then of a collection in twenty—was not interrupted by his death; and settled down, an almost unique occurrence in English literature, into collections of sixteen and fourteen, which were again and again reprinted. It has been said, probably without exaggeration, that there was no writer more popular than De Quincey with clever boys of upper school and lower college age, from about 1855 for twenty or five-and-twenty years onward. For the succeeding period of about the same length there has been, perhaps, something of a reaction, or, at any rate, something of desuetude. W. E. Henley was fond of attacking our author as 'Thomas De Sawdust,' not a very brilliant nickname, though too much in De Quincey's own worst style. The humour of such things as the once famous *On Murder* has gone out of fashion. But, De Quincey has never lost a high reputation, though there have been some dissidences among estimates of him as a writer of ornate prose; and there are those who, admitting serious faults in him, decline to rest his merits merely on his prose of this kind, while joining in the fullest admiration of its qualities.

These merits are undeniable, save by those who object to ornate prose altogether; but the consideration of them has been sometimes unluckily disturbed by unnecessary and invidious comparison.

Although there is no form of criticism which the present writer dislikes so much or of which he has so low an opinion as that which endeavours to class writers in order of merit, it would perhaps be affectation, and would almost certainly be unsatisfactory to the reader, if no notice were taken here of the attempts, sometimes made by persons of distinction, to pit Landor against De Quincey, and award the first and second class to one or the other as the case may be. According to the system here preferred they are both in the first class of this special subject. If it is probable —it may not be quite certain—that De Quincey could not have written the finest passages of the *Dream of Boccaccio*, it is a mere fact that Landor never wrote anything like the best passages of *Our Ladies of Sorrow.* His imagination was too precise; it had not the 'hues of sunset and eclipse' which De Quincey could command. On the other hand, there is what may be called a dewiness, a freshness of talk about natural objects in him which De Quincey has never reached; and he was incapable (at least when he was not trying to be humourous) of the false notes and glaring contrasts of colour in which De Quincey sometimes indulged. They are, in short, stars differing, not in amount, but in kind or constitution of glory. The details of this difference in rhythm, in diction and in various other rhetorical particulars are too minute and would require too much technical expatiation to be dealt with fully here. But it may be generally said, in supplement to the comparisons as little odious as possible put above, that De Quincey's music is more complicated and sometimes more definitely of the *bravura* kind than Landor's, that his diction (though Landor does not by any means disdain foreign and specially technical-botanic terms) is more composite; and that, in accordance with the stronger purely romantic strain in him (though he was, perhaps, except in the point of Latin versemaking, a better scholar than Landor), he seems more often to aim at the vague suggestion, Landor at the precise expression of thought and image.

Although, however, it would be most absurd to deny that this mastery of ornate prose is De Quincey's chief claim to a high position in our literature, it would be almost equally unjust to admit it as the only one or even as the only one of importance. The defects which chequer even this merit to some extent, and the others to a much greater, will be faithfully dealt with; the merits themselves demand the more distinct insistence, because, as has been said, there has, of late, been something of a tendency to neglect, if not to deny, them. They were, indeed, extraordinary qualifications for what has been called 'polygraphy.' De Quincey's reading was very wide, and, though it was sometimes desultory, it was by no means always so. His interests, though in life he was apt to seem an abstracted and unpractical creature, ranged far beyond books. Metaphysics and political economy, verbal criticism of the most minute kind and public events of all sorts, from the Williams murders to the Crimean war and the Indian mutiny; history ancient and modern, with all its 'fringes' of manners, and so forth; contemporary biography; criticism of the more general and abstract kind; all these and many more formed the *farrago* of De Quincey's books and articles. Despite his excessive, and often unlucky, activity in his own and other people's business, some who knew Landor best, and admired him most, have doubted whether he was not always more or less absorbed by his own fancies, his very activities being disastrously excited and affected by the breaking off of his dreams. De Quincey, who passed through life like a kind of shadow, was constantly occupied with most unshadowlike surroundings, though no one would dream better when he—or his opium—chose.

Extreme variety of subject is, therefore, even if we confine the word subject to its lowest meaning, at least as characteristic of De Quincey's works as of Hunt's and Landor's prose; in other ways, it is greater. His application of intellectual strength to most things that he touches differentiates him from the triviality of Hunt and the temperamental uniformity of Landor; the scale of his essays is far more ambitious than that of Hunt, and he escapes what, after a time, becomes the rather artificial, if not positively monotonous, form of the conversation. To this must be added the strange alternations of his handling from the most intricate and (some would say) wiredrawn logicalities to the loftiest flights of rhetoric; the curious glancing habit of mind which indulges itself in endless divagation, again less trivial than Hunt's, but almost as active; the stores of out of the way knowledge; the quaint attitudes of thought and fancy. Those who, in the days of rather idle theorising on aesthetics, insisted on the pleasures of 'unexpectedness,' ought to have found them in De Quincey to an unparalleled extent, while the unexpected things include not seldom the nuggets or, rather, pockets of golden style referred to, and others of thought original and forcibly put.

His counterbalancing faults are, indeed, not small. The greatest of them all must, indeed, force itself upon almost any reader who has been gifted with, or has acquired, any critical faculty. It is what has been called, in words not easy to better, 'an unconquerable tendency to *rigmarole*.' It has been admitted that De Quincey's unexpectedness and divagation are often sources of pleasure; but it cannot be denied that they are often, also, sources of irritation—sometimes of positive boredom. He does not even wait for fresh game to cross the track of his original and proper quarry: he is constantly and deliberately going out of his way to seek and start it right and left. Too often, also, this divagation takes the form of a jocularity which appears to irritate some persons almost always, and which, perhaps, few, when they have attained to years of discretion, can invariably enjoy. His taste is by no means infallible; he has some curious prejudices; and, though the protest against his treatment of personalities is not, perhaps, wholly justified, there is, certainly, too frequent reason for it.

Nevertheless, it should be impossible for anyone who takes a really historical and impartial view of English literature, and who, without that excessive 'classing' of individuals deprecated above, appreciates comparison of them, to put De Quincey far below the highest rank in that literature, if he does not exactly attain to it. Lacking Landor's poetic gift, he may be considered not his equal; if Landor's poetry were barred, he might, with more variety of minor faults, undertake, at least, an equal fight on points of form, and have the odds on his side in point of intellectual quality. To the moral side of psychology, De Quincey did not pay much attention, though there is nothing in the least immoral about him. But his intellectual force was extraordinary, though it was so much divided and so little brought to bear on any single subject or group of subjects that it never accomplished any tangible result worthy of itself. Intellectually, he was by far the greatest of the three men already noticed in this chapter; as an artist, at his best and in his own particular line, he has hardly a superior.

At least a postscript to this chapter should, in such a history as the present, remind readers of what is too often forgotten, that the fame of Walter Savage Landor, inadequate to his merits as it is sometimes thought, has been able to overshadow, in no just degree, that of his younger brother, Robert Eyres Landor. Robert's obscurity was, indeed, partly his own fault; for the *fallentis semita vitae* of a country parsonage was his deliberate and strictly maintained choice; he made little effort (none for a long time) to protest against the attribution of his early play *The Count Arezzi* to Byron, and of his later story *The Fawn of Sertorius*, to his brother Walter; and he is believed to have destroyed most of the copies of the three other plays which came between—*The Earl of Brecon*, *Faith's Fraud* and *The Ferryman*. Earlier than this, in 1828, he had written and published a poem, *The Impious Feast*; and, later than the latest, he gave another prose work, *The Fountain of Arethusa.* But all his books are rare, and, of the few people who have read him, most, perhaps, know only *The Fawn of Sertorius,* a prose story blending delightful fantasy with learning, and a genuinely tragic touch. All good judges who have been acquainted with the works of the two brothers seem to have acknowledged the remarkable family likeness, involving no 'copying.' In verse, Robert did not, perhaps, possess either what have been called above the opal flashes of his brother's most ambitious attempts or the exquisite finish of his finest epigrams; and his prose is less ornate. But, for what Dante calls *gravitas sententiae,* and for phrase worthy of it, he is, probably, Walter's superior. It must be admitted that this family likeness includes—perhaps involves—a somewhat self-willed eccentricity. *The Impious Feast* (Belshazzar's) is mainly written (with a preface defending the form) in what may be called, in all seriousness, rimed blank verse—or, in other words, verse constructed on the lines of a blank verse paragraph but with rimes—completed at entirely irregular intervals, and occasionally tipped or sandwiched with an Alexandrine. The book is so far from common that a specimen may be given:

> Still in her native glory unsubdued,
> And indestructible for force or time
> That first of mightiest cities, mistress, queen,
> Even as of old earth's boast and marvel, stood;
> Imperious, inaccessible, sublime:
> If changed she might be all that she had been.
> No conscious doubts abased her regal eye,
> Rest had not made it weak, but more serene;
> Those who repelled her power, revered her majesty.
> Full at her feet wealth's largest fountain streamed;
> Dominion crowned her head; on either side
> Were sceptred power and armed strength; she seemed
> Above mischance imperishably high;
> Though half the nations of the earth defied,
> They raged, but could not harm her—fierce disdain
> Beheld the rebel kingdoms storm in vain.
> What were their threats to her—Bel's daughter and his pride?

Whether this irregular cymbal-accompaniment of rime pleases or displeases in a poem of some six or seven thousand lines—varied only by occasional lyric interludes, sometimes fully strophic in form—must depend much, if not wholly, on individual taste. But the poem, though it has not the craggy splendour of *Gebir,* is, at least, as good as Southey's non-lyrical epics, and superior to almost all those of the lesser poets mentioned elsewhere.

The *Fawn of Sertorius* has real charm and interest; its prose companion will certainly surprise and may disappoint, though there are good things in it. *The Fountain of Arethusa* consists—after a preliminary narrative, lively enough in matter and picture, of a journey from the depths of a Derbyshire cavern to the Other end of Nowhere—of two volumes of dialogue, rather resembling Southey's *Colloquies* than the fraternal *Conversations*, between a certain Antony Lugwardine and divers great men of antiquity, especially Aristotle and Cicero, the talk being more or less framed by a continuation of the narrative, both in incident and description. The general scheme is, of course, familiar enough, and so are some of the details, including the provision of a purely John Bull companion who cannot, like his friend Lugwardine, speak Latin or Greek, and who is rather cruelly killed at the end to make a dying fall. The often-tried contrast of ancient and modern thought and manners presents the usual opportunities for criticism. But the whole is admirably written and gives abundant proof that Robert's humour (as, indeed, we could guess from his letters printed by Forster) was of a somewhat surer kind than Walter's, while his description is sometimes hardly less good though never quite so elaborate. The chapter of the recovery of his farm by the peasant Spanus after his delivery of the fawn to Sertorius is a perfect example of the Landorian method, permeated by an economy of attractions which is hardly to be matched in the works of the more famous brother. That, like almost all classical novels, the book is somewhat overloaded with *Charicles*-and-*Gallus* detail, is the only fault, and the passion of the end is real and deep. So it is in the three curious plays (two tragedies and a tragicomic 'drama') of 1841, while their versification, if deficient in lissomeness, is of high quality, and supplies numerous striking short passages somewhat resembling Scott's 'old play' fragment-mottoes. But, on the other hand, the diction and phrasing are among the obscurest in English—concealing, rather than revealing, the thought, motive and even action of the characters. Robert Landor, in short, is a most interesting instance of a 'strong nativity' defrauded of its possible developments, certainly by an unduly recluse life, perhaps by other causes which we do not know. In the case of hardly any other English author would it be more desirable to see, in one of his own phrases, 'what nature first meant [him] to be till some misadventure interposed[1].'

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[1] Words already quoted, though not with the application given above, in Oliver Elton's *Survey of English Literature*, 1780—1830, vol. II, p. 46, the only good recent notice of Robert's work with which the present writer is acquainted.

CHAPTER X

JANE AUSTEN

THE literary descent of Jane Austen's fiction is plain to trace. Its ancestors were the work of Defoe, the Roger de Coverly papers in *The Spectator*, the fiction of Fielding and of Richardson, the poems of Cowper and the poetical tales of Crabbe. It belongs to the movement towards naturalism and the study of common life and character, without intrusion of the romantic and the heroic, which prevailed in England in the closing years of the eighteenth century. An impetus, together with a narrowing of its scope, was given to it by Fanny Burney. Of Fanny Burney, it was written in a previous volume of this *History* that she created the novel of home life. Jane Austen read her novels (in her twenty-first year (1796) she subscribed to *Camilla*); and, to them, with the works of Crabbe and Cowper, must be allowed an important share in determining the direction that her genius took. She could not, it might be said, have written otherwise than she did; but, from Fanny Burney, she may well have learned how much could be achieved in the novel of home life, and how well worth while was the chronicling of such 'small beer.' Living a quiet and retired life, she found her material in beer even smaller than Fanny Burney's, and her fine instinct moved her to keep to it. There is more oddity and nodosity of humourous character in Fanny Burney's novels than in Jane Austen's, to provide a relief from the main object. As Fanny Burney refined upon Smollett, so Jane Austen refined upon her; and, working rigidly within the limits of what she recognised as the proper field of her talents, she produced novels that came nearer to artistic perfection than any others in the English language.

There was nothing of the literary woman in the external affairs of her life and its conduct. Born on 16 December 1775, at Steventon in Hampshire, of which her father was rector, and dying at Winchester on 18 July 1817, she passed the intervening years almost entirely in the country. She lived with her family in Bath from 1801 to 1806, and at Southampton from 1806 to 1809. Later, she paid occasional visits to London, where she went not a little to the play; but she never moved in 'literary circles,' was never 'lionised' and never drew much advantage from personal contact with other people of intellect. The moment of her greatest worldly exaltation occurred, probably, on 13 November 1815, when, by order of the prince regent, his librarian, J. S. Clarke, showed her over the library of Carlton house, and intimated that she might dedicate her next novel to his royal highness. A few months later, Clarke, now chaplain and private English secretary to prince Leopold of Coburg, wrote to her suggesting that another novel should be dedicated to the prince, and adding that 'any historical romance, illustrative of the history of the august House of Cobourg, would just now be very interesting.' Jane Austen replied:

> You are very, very kind in your hints as to the sort of composition which might recommend me at present, and I am fully sensible that an historical romance, founded on the House of Saxe Cobourg, might be much more to the purpose of profit or popularity than such pictures of domestic life in country villages as I deal in. But I could no more write a romance than an epic poem. I could not sit seriously down to write a serious romance under any other motive than to save my life; and if it were indispensable for me to keep it up, and never relax into laughing at myself or at other people, I am sure I should be hung before I had finished the first chapter. No, I must keep to my own style and go on in my own way, and though I may never succeed again in that, I am convinced that I should totally fail in any other.

The letter is full of touches characteristic of its author; but the immediate point is Jane Austen's consciousness of her limits. Living a quiet life in the country or at Bath, she kept her eyes steadily upon the comedy and character about her[1]; and, writing her novels in the common sitting-room of the family, or in the room which she shared with her beloved sister Cassandra, she gave herself no airs.

Jane Austen was not a great or an adventurous reader. She told her niece that she regretted not having read more and written less in her younger days. She appears to have read what people in general were reading. Her admiration for Crabbe inspired a characteristically playful jest about her intending to become his wife; Richardson she studied closely. For the most part, she read, like other people the current novels and poems. But, whatever she read, she turned to account—largely, it must be admitted, through her shrewd sense of humour. The aim of making fun of other novels underlay the first work which she completed and sold, *Northanger Abbey*; and burlesque and parody appear to have been the motives of most of the stories which she wrote while she was a young girl. They are extant in manuscript; and we are told that they

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[1] Compare, with this letter, the amusing 'Plan of a novel, according to hints from various quarters,' printed in Austen-Leigh, W. and R. A., *Jane Austen*, pp. 337 ff.

> are of a slight and flimsy texture, and are generally intended to be nonsensical.... However puerile the matter, they are always composed in pure simple English, quite free from the over-ornamented style which might be expected from so young a writer.

Others of these early stories were seriously intended; and the opening of one of them, *Kitty, or The Bower*, has the very manner of the opening of her published novels.

The transition from these earliest efforts to her published work may be found in an unfinished story, which the author refrained from making public, but which was printed by J. E. Austen-Leigh in the second edition (1871) of his *Memoir of Jane Austen*. Somewhere, so far as can be ascertained, between 1792 and 1796, when Jane Austen was between seventeen and twenty-one years old, she wrote this fragment, *Lady Susan*. The influence of Richardson upon its form is clear; the tale is written in letters. Possibly, too, Fanny Burney's *Evelina* may have provided a hint for the situation of a young girl, Frederica. The chief character, Lady Susan Vernon, is a finished and impressive study of a very wicked woman—a cruel and utterly selfish schemer. Jane Austen left the tale unfinished, possibly because she found that Lady Susan was too wicked to be consonant with her own powers of character-drawing; possibly, because she felt hampered (brilliant letter-writer though she was in her own person, and in the persons of her creation) by the epistolary form. In either case, we see at work that severe artistic self-judgment which is one of the chief causes of her power. About the same time, she completed *Elinor and Marianne*, a first sketch for *Sense and Sensibility*, which, like *Lady Susan*, was written in letters. The author did not offer it for publication, and never afterwards attempted the epistolary form of novel.

Jane Austen was twenty-one when she began, in 1796, the earliest of her published works, the novel then called *First Impressions*, but new-named *Pride and Prejudice* on its publication, in a revised form, in 1813. In 1797, her father offered the manuscript to Cadell, the London publisher, who promptly declined to consider it. *First Impressions* had been completed some three months when Jane Austen began to write *Sense and Sensibility.* This novel appears to have been left unfinished for some thirteen years, or, if finished, to have been left unrevised; for it was not till April 1811 that it was in the hands of the printer, and it was published in the autumn of that year, the title-page stating that it was written 'By a Lady.' This was the first of Jane Austen's books to be published. Its success was immediate. In 1798, she began to write *Susan,* which was the first draft of *Northanger Abbey.* This, too, she put by for some years. In 1803, she sold it to a London publisher, who did not issue it; in 1809, she tried in vain to secure publication; in 1816, she succeeded in recovering the manuscript. She then, perhaps, worked upon it further; yet, she was still doubtful whether she should publish it or not, and, at last, it was posthumously published in two volumes in 1818, at the same time as *Persuasion*[1]. In 1803 or 1804 (according to the only piece of evidence—the dates in the water-marks of the paper on which it is written), Jane Austen began a story that she never finished; it was published under the title *The Watsons,* by J. E. Austen-Leigh in the second edition (1871) of his *Memoir.* He suggests that

> the author became aware of the evil of having placed her heroine too low, in such a position of poverty and obscurity as, though not necessarily connected with vulgarity, has a sad tendency to degenerate into it—

a suggestion which displays little appreciation of the spirit of Jane Austen's work, and is at variance with the facts of the story. Emma Watson, though poor, is gentle-born; and the only hint of vulgarity to be observed in the tale is furnished by an impertinent peer, Lord Osborne, and a hardened flirt in good circumstances, Tom Musgrave. It appears to have been the author's intention that the heroine should ultimately marry a refined and intelligent clergyman, whose character, together with that of Henry Tilney, might have served to counteract the impression produced by that of Mr Collins and of Mr Elton.

After 1803, or 1804, there came a gap of several years in Jane Austen's literary work. It was not till 1812 that she began *Mansfield Park,* which was finished in June 1813, and published in or about May 1814. *Emma* was begun in January 1814, finished in March 1815 and published in December 1816. *Persuasion,* the last-written of her published works, was begun in the spring or summer of 1815 and finished in July 1816. The manuscript was still in her hands at her death in 1817; and was posthumously published in two volumes in 1818. In January 1817, she began to write a new novel, but, after the middle of March, could work no more. Various reasons have been assigned for the gap in her literary production between 1803 or 1804 and 1812. It will be noticed that, from 1812 to 1816, she worked steadily; and further significance of the dates mentioned above is her reluctance to publish anything that had not undergone long meditation and revision.

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[1] On the writing and publication of *Northanger Abbey,* see Austen-Leigh, W. and R. A., *Jane Austen,* pp. 96—97, 174—5, 230—4, 333, 336, 337.

Of the six published novels, *Northanger Abbey* is, probably, that which comes nearest to being Jane Austen's earliest work. Finished before 1803, it may have been revised after she recovered the manuscript in 1816; but it seems unlikely that it received so complete a revision as did *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sense and Sensibility.* In the 'Advertisement by the Authoress,' which prefaced the book on its publication, Jane Austen writes:

> The public are entreated to bear in mind that thirteen years have passed since it was finished, many more since it was begun, and that during that period places, manners, books, and opinions have undergone considerable changes.

The novel paints the world of 1803, not that of 1816. It has, moreover, features that distinguish it from the other published works. It is linked to the earlier stories, in which Jane Austen made fun of the sensational and romantic novels then popular. As the source of *Joseph Andrews* was the desire to ridicule *Pamela,* so the source of *Northanger Abbey* was the desire to ridicule such romantic tales as *The Mysteries of Udolpho* by Mrs Radcliffe; and, as *Joseph Andrews* developed into something beyond a parody, so did *Northanger Abbey.* Secondly, there is a youthful gaiety, almost jollity, about the work, a touch of something very near to farce, which appears in none of the other novels. Catherine Morland, again, may not be the youngest of Jane Austen's heroines (Marianne Dashwood and Fanny Price were certainly younger); but the frank girlishness which makes her delightful gives the impression of being more in tune with the author's spirit than the more critically studied natures of Marianne and Fanny. Be that as it may, *Northanger Abbey* has more in it of the spirit of youthfulness than any of the other novels. Its idea was, apparently, intended to be the contrast between a normal, healthy-natured girl and the romantic heroines of fiction; and, by showing the girl slightly affected with romantic notions, Jane Austen exhibits the contrast between the world as it is and the world as imagined by the romancers whom she wished to ridicule. The first paragraph of the first chapter, in telling us what Catherine Morland was, tells us, with delicate irony, what she was not; dwelling, in every line, upon the extraordinary beauty and ability of romantic heroines. As the story goes on, we learn that a girl may completely lack this extraordinary beauty and ability without falling into the opposite extremes. At Bath, Catherine Morland comes into contact with silly and vulgar people, the Thorpes; and the contrast makes her candour and right feeling shine all the brighter; while, under the educative influence of wellbred people with a sense of humour, the Tilneys, she develops quickly. Staying at the Tilneys' house, she is cured of her last remnant of romantic folly; and, on leaving her, we are confident that she will make Henry Tilney a sensible and charming wife. Jane Austen's sound and lively sense, her Greek feeling for balance and proportion, are not less clear in *Northanger Abbey* than in the other novels. None of the others, moreover, gives so clear an impression of the author's enjoyment in writing her story. The scenes of amusement at Bath, the vulgarity and insincerity of Isabella Thorpe, the broader comedy of her brother, the ironic talk of Henry Tilney, all are executed with high-spirited gusto; and we may believe that Jane Austen loved the simple-minded, warm-hearted girl, whom she tenderly steers between the rocks into harbour.

With *Sense and Sensibility*, we revert to the chronological order of publication. *Elinor and Marianne*, a first sketch of the story, written in the form of letters, appears to have been read aloud by Jane Austen to her family about 1795; in the autumn of 1797, she began to write the novel in its present form; and, after laying it aside for some years, she prepared it for publication in 1809, when, after several changes of abode, she had settled at Chawton in Hampshire. Begun before *Northanger Abbey*, it lacks the youthful spirit of that novel, while betraying, in a different manner, the inexperience of its author. In construction and characterisation, it is the weakest of Jane Austen's novels. The hearty, vulgar Mrs Jennings, her bearish son-in-law, Mr Palmer, her silly daughter, Mrs Palmer, provide comedy, it is true; but this comedy is mere 'comic relief'—a separate matter from the story; and it is not fitted to the story with perfect adroitness. In the conduct of the novel, the feebleness of Edward Ferrars, the nonentity of colonel Brandon and the meanness of the Steele sisters are all a little exaggerated, as if Jane Austen's desire to make her point had interfered with her complete control of her material. It is, to some extent, the same with Mrs Dashwood and her two elder daughters. Anxiety to demonstrate that strong feelings are not incompatible with self-restraint, and to show the folly of an exaggerated expression of sentiment, has resulted in a touch of something like acerbity in the treatment of Mrs Dashwood and Marianne (suggesting that Jane Austen was personally angry with them), and in a too rarely dissipated atmosphere of reproof about Elinor. The spirit of pure comedy is not so constant in *Sense and Sensibility* as in any other novel that Jane Austen wrote; though the second chapter, which describes the famous discussion between John Dashwood and his wife, is, perhaps, the most perfect to be found in any of her novels.

Jane Austen's next novel, *Pride and Prejudice*, published in 1813, is her most brilliant work. The wit in it sparkles. She herself thought that it needed more relief. She wrote to her sister, Cassandra, with a characteristic couching of sober sense in playful exaggeration:

> The work is rather too light, and bright, and sparkling; it wants shade; it wants to be stretched out here and there with a long chapter of sense, if it could be had; if not, of solemn specious nonsense, about something unconnected with the story; an essay on writing, a critique on Walter Scott, or the history of Buonoparte, on anything that would form a contrast, and bring the reader with increased delight to the playfulness and epigrammatism of the general style.

She did not perceive, perhaps, how the story gains in gravity and quiet when it comes to the change in Elizabeth Bennet's feeling for Darcy. This part of the book offers a foretaste of the sympathetic understanding which, later, was to give its peculiar charm to *Persuasion*; and, besides supplying the needed relief to the flashing wit with which Jane Austen reveals her critical insight into people with whom she did not sympathise, it affords a signal example of her subtle method. The story is seen almost wholly through the eyes of Elizabeth Bennet; yet, without moving from this standpoint, Jane Austen contrives to show what was happening, without Elizabeth's knowledge, in Elizabeth's mind. To a modern reader, the great blot on the book is the author's neglect to lift Darcy sufficiently above the level of aristocratic brutality: it has constantly to be remembered that, in Jane Austen's day and social class, birth and fortune were regarded with more respect than they are now. Darcy's pride was something other than snobbishness; it was the result of a genuinely aristocratic consciousness of merit, acting upon a haughty nature. To Jane Austen herself, Elizabeth Bennet was 'as delightful a creature as ever appeared in print'; and *Pride and Prejudice* (immediately upon its publication) was 'her own darling child.' With subsequent generations, it has been the most popular of her novels, but not because of Elizabeth or Darcy, still less for sweet Jane Bennet and her honest Bingley. The outstanding merit of the book is its witty exposition of foolish and disagreeable people: Mr Bennet (he must be included for his moral indolence, however he may delight by his humour), Mrs Bennet, Elizabeth's younger sisters, Lady Catherine de Bourgh, best of all, Mr Collins. Taken by itself, this study of a pompous prig is masterly; but, in *Pride and Prejudice*, nothing can be taken by itself. The art of the book is so fine that it contains no character which is without effect upon the whole; and, in a novel dealing with pride and with prejudice, the study of such toadyism and such stupidity as that of Mr Collins gives and gains incalculable force.

Jane Austen's next novel, *Mansfield Park*, is less brilliant and sparkling than *Pride and Prejudice*, and, while entering no less subtly than *Persuasion* into the fine shades of the affections and feelings, it is the widest in scope of the six. Begun, probably, in the autumn of 1812, and finished in the summer of 1813, this was the first novel which Jane Austen had written without interruption, and remains the finest example of her power of sustaining the interest throughout a long and quiet narrative. The development of Fanny Price, from the shy little girl into the woman who marries Edmund Bertram, is one of Jane Austen's finest achievements in the exposition of character; and, in all fiction, there are few more masterly devices of artistic truth than the effect of Crawford's advances upon Fanny herself and upon Fanny's importance in the reader's mind. In *Mansfield Park*, the study of Fanny Price is only one of several excellent studies of young women—the two Bertram girls and Miss Crawford being chief among the rest. *Mansfield Park* is the book in which Jane Austen most clearly shows the influence of Richardson, whose *Sir Charles Grandison* was one of her favourite novels; and her genius can scarcely be more happily appreciated than by a study of the manner in which she weaves into material of a Richardsonian fineness the brilliant threads of such witty portraiture of mean or foolish people as that of Lady Bertram, of Mrs Norris, of Fanny's own family, of Mr Yates, Mr Rushworth and others. Edmund Bertram, though presenting a great advance on the Edward Ferrars of *Sense and Sensibility*, suffers, in his character of 'hero,' from something of the same disability, a weakness which, to some extent, interferes with the reader's interest in his fortune. And there appears to be some slight uncertainty in the drawing of Sir Thomas Bertram, whom we are scarcely prepared by the early part of the story to find a man of so much good sense and affection as he appears later. Against him, however, must be set the author's notable success in the character of Henry Crawford—an example of male portraiture that has never been equalled by a woman writer. One subsidiary person in the novel may lend to it a personal interest. It has been suggested[1] that Fanny's brother, William Price, the young sailor, was drawn from Jane Austen's recollections of what one of her own sailor brothers, Charles Austen, had been, twelve or fourteen years earlier.

Emma, the fourth and last novel which Jane Austen published in her lifetime, was begun in January 1814, and finished in March 1815, to appear in the following December. Jane Austen was now at the height of her powers. The book was written rapidly and surely; and the success of her previous novels doubtless encouraged her to express herself with confidence in the way peculiarly her own. She chose, as she declared, 'a heroine whom no one but myself will much like'; and, in delineating her, she made no sacrifices to any public desire for what Mary Russell Mitford, in passing judgment on her work, called 'the *beau idéal* of the female character.' Emma is a tiresome girl, full of faults; and yet, far from not being 'much liked,' she has called forth more fervent affection than any other of Jane Austen's characters. Jane Austen herself admired Elizabeth Bennet; she loved little Fanny Price; Emma, she both loved and admired, without a shade of patronage or a hint of heroine-worship. That Emma should be loved, as she is loved, for her faults as well as for her virtues, is one among Jane Austen's many claims to the rank of greatness in her art. Scarcely less skilful is the portrait of the wise and patient Knightley, whose reproofs to the wayward girl never shake the reader's conviction of his humanity and charm. The laughter of the comic spirit never comes near to sharpness in *Emma*, except in the case of Mrs Elton; and, even with Mrs Elton, we feel, as we scarcely feel with the Steele sisters or with Mr Collins, that Jane Austen is not allowing the lady to show herself at her very worst. For Mr Woodhouse, Miss Bates and Harriet Smith she clearly had some degree of affection, which she communicates to her readers. And, with regard to Harriet Smith, it is to be noticed that, rarely as Jane Austen touches our pity, she feels this helpless, bewildered creature to be a fit occasion for compassion, as her more capable women are not, and allows us to be touched by Harriet Smith's regrets for Robert Martin and the Abbey Mill farm. There are, we may add, few finer examples in fiction of suggestive reticence than Jane Austen's treatment of Jane Fairfax. The mystery of the story demands that we should be kept in the dark about her ; yet we feel that we know her as well as any character that Jane Austen created.

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[1] Austen-Leigh, W. and R. A., *Jane Austen*, p. 298.

After *Emma*, Jane Austen published nothing in her lifetime. The posthumous novel *Persuasion* was begun in the spring or summer of 1815 and finished in July 1816, the last two chapters being written a little later, to take the place of the original last chapter, which did not satisfy the author. Then she put the manuscript by ; and her ill-health and death caused it to remain unpublished. Signs of failing energy and spirits have been observed by some in *Persuasion*. The interpolated story told to Anne Elliot by Mrs Smith may be admitted to be dull, for Jane Austen; and some weight may be attached to her statement that Anne Elliot was 'almost too good for me.' The tone of the novel, as a whole, is graver and tenderer than that of any of the other five; but woven in with its gravity and tenderness is the most delicate and mellow of all Jane Austen's humour. Such imperfections as the novel may have may be interpreted with equal fairness as signs of growth rather than of decay. Jane Austen was changing her tone, and had not yet completely mastered the new conditions. Whether Anne Elliot was 'too good' for her or not, she achieved the difficult feat of making her interesting from start to finish. The same may be said of captain Wentworth. In himself, he is an interesting personage; but, in *Persuasion*, Jane Austen accomplishes more perfectly than in any other of her novels the task of revealing the interest which lies in the interplay of ordinary persons. All the characters in *Persuasion* are less sharply accentuated than those in the other novels. In Sir Walter Elliot and Miss Elliot, Mrs Clay and Mr and Mrs Charles Musgrove, Jane Austen is making milder fun than usual of less prominent 'humours' than usual. The charm of the novel lies in the luminous reactions of one character upon another, and of all upon each; and, considering its difference from the other novels, it suggests that Jane Austen, had she lived, would have excelled in fiction of another kind than that which she had hitherto practised.

From one point of view, then, *Persuasion* may be regarded as Jane Austen's most characteristic novel. If it lacks the sharp wit and the high spirits of *Pride and Prejudice*, and the wide scope of *Mansfield Park*, it reveals more than they do of the interest which the seeing eye may find in ordinary people. Therein lies Jane Austen's individual quality. We have seen how conscious she was of her peculiar bent, and how resolute to keep to it. Maria Edgeworth, as Scott remarked, can offer us higher life, more romantic incident and broader comedy. Of romance, Jane Austen has none, either in character or in setting. The rocks and streams, the forests and castles, which form the furniture of the romantics, have no place in her novels. This was due to no want of appreciation of natural beauty. The opening of chapter IX of *Sense and Sensibility* would be sufficient to prove the contrary. Elinor, Marianne and Edward's talk on the picturesque in chapter XVIII of the same novel reveals once more the justice, the Greek sense and balance, that determine all Jane Austen's work; and, in chapter VIII of *Mansfield Park*, we find her giving the capital example of her principle. The party approaching Sotherton discusses its appearance; yet, the prominent interest of the scene is not the picturesqueness of Sotherton, but the relation of Sotherton and of its owner, Mr Rushworth, to the hopes and fears of women among the visitors. In her reaction from romance, Jane Austen dispensed with all aids borrowed from romance. The fall of Louisa Musgrove from the steps on the Cobb at Lyme Regis (an incident strictly consonant with the character and aims of Louisa); the fall of Marianne on the hill at Barton; the sudden return of Sir Thomas Bertram to Mansfield park—these are the most exciting incidents in the six novels. The very elopements are contemplated indirectly, and used, not for their own dramatic force, but for their effect upon the lives of others than the runaways. Character, not incident, was Jane Austen's aim; and, of character, whether in itself marked, or interesting only in its interactions, she found enough in the narrow circle and the humdrum life encountered by her immediate view. Humdrum, it certainly was. During Jane Austen's working years, while England was fighting for existence or newly triumphant, while the prince regent was in the hey-day of his luxury and while revolutionary ideas were winning for poets and reformers present shame and future glory, there can have been no lack of bright colour and sharp contrast in life. Local humours, ripe and rich in the days of Fielding, can hardly have been planed away by the action of the growing refinement. Jane Austen, as novelist, is blind to all this multicoloured life. There are no extremes, social or other, in her books. The peasantry is scarcely mentioned; of noblemen, there is not one. Of set purpose, she keeps her eye fixed upon the manners of a small circle of country gentlefolk, who seem to have nothing to do but to pay calls, picnic, take walks, drive out, talk and dance. Of dancing, Jane Austen herself was fond; private theatricals are considered a little too heady an amusement for that circle. It is a world of idle men—her clergy are frequently absentees—and of unoccupied women, not one of whom is remarkable for any fineness or complexity of disposition or intellect, or for any strong peculiarity of circumstance. She shows, moreover, no ardent moral purpose or intellectual passion which might lend force where force was not to be found; she never uses her characters as pegs for ethical or metaphysical doctrines. Newman remarked of her that she had not a dream of the high catholic ἦθος. There are no great passions in her stories. She rarely appeals to her reader's emotions, and never by means of the characters that she most admires or likes. It may be said that, on the whole, she appears to trust and to value love—it was observed by Whately that all Anne Elliot's troubles arose from her not yielding to her youthful love for Wentworth—but, beyond that, it would be unsafe to go.

With these limitations, natural and chosen, and out of these unpromising materials, Jane Austen composed novels that come near to artistic perfection. Her greatest gift was that sense of balance and proportion to which reference has been already made. To everything that she saw, she applied this touchstone of good sense. Next came her extraordinarily perspicacious and sensitive understanding, not of women only, but of men as well. Notwithstanding her sheltered life and the moderate amount of her learning, she saw deeply and clearly to the springs of action, and understood the finest shades of feeling and motive. She was sensitive to the slightest deviation from the standard of good breeding and good sense; and any deviation (there can be no doubt of it appealed to her sense of fun. Gossip by Miss Mitford and, perhaps, others, brought her a reputation for acerbity and spleen. She reveals scarcely a hint of either in her writings; she is scrupulously fair even to Mrs Norris and to Mr Collins. Her attitude as satirist is best explained by a quotation from chapter XI of *Pride and Prejudice*. Says Darcy:

> 'The wisest and the best of men—nay, the wisest and best of their actions—may be rendered ridiculous by a person whose first object in life is a joke.'
>
> 'Certainly,' replied Elizabeth—'there are such people, but I hope I am not one of *them*. I hope I never ridicule what is wise or good. Follies and nonsense, whims and inconsistencies, *do* divert me, I own, and I laugh at them whenever I can.'

And her sense of fun was proportioned to the follies which diverted her. Gross humours she disliked in other writers' novels, and never attempted in her own. With the sharpest and most delicate of wit, as deft in expression as it was subtle in perception, she diverted herself and her readers with the fine shades of folly in a circle of which the rudest member might be called refined. Her fun, moreover, was always fair, always good-tempered and always maintained in relation to her standard of good sense and good manners. To her delicate perception and her fairness, combined, is due what Whately called her Shakespearean discrimination in fools. Mr Collins could not be confused with Mr Elton, nor Lucy Steele with Mrs Elton, nor the proud Miss Elliot with the proud Misses Bertram. Jane Austen clings to her fairness even when it seems to tell against her favourite characters. She makes Fanny Price unhappy in her parents' home at Portsmouth, where a feebler novelist would have attempted to show her heroine in a light purely favourable; she attributes to Emma Woodhouse innumerable little failings. This just and consistent fidelity to character plays a large part in the subtlety of her discrimination, not only in fools but in less obviously diverting people. Her clarity of imaginative vision, and her fidelity to what she saw with it, make her characters real. Imagine Elizabeth Bennet, Elinor Dashwood, Emma Woodhouse to be living women today, and at a first meeting in a drawing-room we might not know which was which. After seeing them through Jane Austen's eyes, we know them as thoroughly as we know the characters of Shakespeare; for, like Shakespeare, she knew all about the creatures of her observation and imagination. It is not only that she could tell her family and friends particulars of their lives which did not appear in the novels, or that she left their natures so plain that later writers may amuse themselves by continuing their histories[1]. They are seen in the round, and are true, in the smallest details, to the particular nature.

Modest as she was, and working purposely in a very restricted field, Jane Austen set herself a very high artistic aim. To imagine and express personages, not types; to develop and preserve their characters with strict fidelity; to reveal them not by external analysis but by narrative in which they should appear to reveal themselves; to attain, in the construction of her novels, as near as might be, to a perfection of form that should be the outcome of the interaction of the natures and motives in the story: these were her aims, and these aims she achieved, perhaps, with more consistency and more completeness than any other novelist except, it may be, de Maupassant. In the earlier novels, her wit diverts her readers with its liveliness; her later work shows a tenderer, graver outlook and a deepening of her study of character. Through all alike, there runs the endearing charm of a shrewd mind and a sweet nature.

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[1] Cf. Brinton, Sybil G., *Old Friends and New Fancies*, 1913.

CHAPTER XI

LESSER NOVELISTS

Jane Austen did not found any school; and her artistic strictness is not shown by any of her contemporaries or immediate successors. Several among them, especially women writers, took advantage of the new fields which she had opened to fiction; but, in most cases, the influence of the earlier and less regular novel is evident, and perhaps the influence of a period full of contrasts and extremes. In the novels of Susan Edmonstone Ferrier there is something of the rough sarcasm of Smollett, mingled with a strong didactic flavour and with occasional displays of sentiment that may be due to Mackenzie. To her personal friend Scott, she may have owed something in her studies of Scottish life, but Maria Edgeworth was her principal model. Her first novel, *Marriage,* was written in 1810, though it was not published till 1818, when it appeared anonymously. *Marriage* is full of vigorous work. The studies of the highland family into which an English lady of aristocratic birth and selfish temper marries by elopement are spirited and humourous; but the story rambles on through a good many years; and the character of Lady Juliana, poor, proud and worldly, is but a thin thread on which to hang the tale of three generations. *The Inheritance,* published in 1824, has more unity. *Destiny,* published in 1831, is chiefly remarkable for the character of McDow, the minister. To compare McDow with Mr Collins is to see the difference between Jane Austen and Susan Ferrier; but the latter, with her coarse workmanship succeeds in achieving a picture full of humour. The novel becomes very sentimental and strained towards the close, a criticism which, also, holds true of *The Inheritance*; but Susan Ferrier was a novelist of power, whose work is still fresh and interesting.

Coarse as her workmanship may be compared with that of Jane Austen, it is refined and delicate by the side of that of a remarkable woman, Frances, the mother of Anthony and Adolphus, Trollope. Mrs Trollope's best work was done in middle-age, and may be found in two novels, *The Vicar of Wrexhill* (1837) and *The Widow Barnaby* (1838). *The Vicar of Wrexhill* is a book of virulent malignity, in which the chief character is a clergyman of evangelical beliefs. He is licentious, suave, cold and cruel; and the force with which his vices are shown to be mingled with his religion could only have been displayed by a novelist of courageous and powerful mind. Be the character possible or impossible, it is throughout credible in the reading; and Mrs Trollope never permits her reader to escape from the terror which the man and his deeds arouse. *The Widow Barnaby* is written in more humourous mood. The chief character is the buxom widow of a country apothecary, who poses as a woman of fortune. Vulgar, selfish and cruel, she is still a source of constant delight to readers who have stomached coarser things in Smollett. Rough as Mrs Trollope's work is, and crude, especially in the drawing of minor characters, her power and her directness remain unmatched by any English author of her sex, save Aphra Behn.

There is something, perhaps, of Jane Austen's influence to be traced in the novels of Catherine Grace Gore. Mrs Gore, like Mrs Trollope, was a very prolific worker. Her reputation has suffered at Thackeray's hands. From *Lords and Liveries*, by the author of *Dukes and Déjeuners, Heart and Diamonds, Marchionesses and Milliners*, one of Thackeray's *Novels by Eminent Hands*, it might be imagined that Mrs Gore was nothing but a novelist of 'high life.' True, she liked to give her characters titles of nobility; and that was exactly the feature in her work which would attract Thackeray's notice. But, in *Mrs Armytage, or Female Domination* (1836) and in *Mothers and Daughters* (1831) there is considerable ability. In *Mothers and Daughters* may be traced clearly an attempt to follow Jane Austen in fidelity to life and in unity of form and matter; and the study of the heartless 'society' mother, Lady Maria Willingham, is a more finely-painted piece of work than Susan Ferrier's more extravagantly designed Lady Juliana Douglas. In *Mrs Armytage*, Mrs Gore came nearest to being a novelist of the first rank. The chief character in this tale of landed gentry in Yorkshire is a woman of heroic and domineering temper, whose rather weak-willed son has married the pretty daughter of a vulgar betting-man. Broad contrasts, like that between Mrs Armytage and the coarse and good-hearted relatives of her daughter-in-law, and fine contrasts like that between Mrs Armytage and her son, are contrived with a sincere but not too subtle art, so as to throw into relief the nature of this terrible and oppressive but, nevertheless, majestic woman. In all the unhappiness that she causes, she is never altogether hateful; but, at the close, the author refrains from exaggerating her punishment. The book shows a fitness and justice that make it comparable to the work of Jane Austen, though it is quite unlike that work in its gravity, its didactic tone and its use of incident.

Letitia Elizabeth Landon, the poet, scarcely survives now as a novelist, although *Ethel Churchill*, her last and best attempt in fiction (1837), may take its place among the second-rate novels of the day. So, too, may the *Granby* (1826) of Thomas Henry Lister. Lister was a rather ladylike novelist, which, perhaps, accounts for the erroneous attribution to him of Mrs Cradock's novel, *Hulse House*. But there is good work in *Granby*, with its fine, manly hero and its baseborn, reckless, but not unattractive villain. Lister moves easily among titles of nobility, and, in the course of this story, presents us with an aristocratic coxcomb whom it is difficult not to regard as a perverted Darcy. Lister is clever at smart conversation, which seems to have been much valued in its own day, however tiresome it may appear now; and he succeeds in conveying an impression of a real world, inhabited by real people. He has his interest, therefore, for the student of external manners.

Meanwhile, the novel of terror, of which Jane Austen had made fun in *Northanger Abbey*, continued to flourish, though in a modified form; and women were prominent among those who wrote this kind of fiction. It was a woman, and a woman of a later period in its history, who produced the finest work of genius to be found in this class of writings, *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus* (1818).

Its author, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, has left on record the circumstances of its production. With her husband, Byron and Polidori, she occupied part of a wet summer in Switzerland in reading volumes of ghost stories translated from German into French. Byron suggested that each member of the party should write a ghost story. Mary Shelley waited long for an idea. Conversations between Shelley and Byron about the experiments of Darwin and the principle of life at length suggested to her the subject of *Frankenstein*.

> At first I thought but of a few pages or of a short tale; but Shelley urged me to develop the idea at greater length. I certainly did not owe the

> suggestion of one incident, nor scarcely of one train of feeling, to my husband, and yet but for his incitement it would never have taken the form in which it was presented to the world. From this declaration I must except the preface. As far as I can recollect, it was entirely written by him.

It has been held, nevertheless, that Mary Shelley, unaided, was incapable of writing so fine a story. 'Nothing,' wrote Richard Garnett, 'but an absolute magnetising of her brain by Shelley's can account for her having risen so far above her usual self as in *Frankenstein.*' Comparison of *Frankenstein* with a later work by Mary Shelley, *The Last Man* (1826), may, perhaps, temper that judgment. *The Last Man* is a much longer work than *Frankenstein.* It describes the destruction, spread over many years, of the entire human race, all but one man, by an epidemic disease. The book shows many signs of effort and labour. The imaginative faculty often runs wild, and often flags. The social and political foresight displayed is but feeble. The work is unequal and extravagant. Yet, in *The Last Man*, there are indubitable traces of the power that created *Frankenstein*; and, if Mary Shelley, working in unhappy days at a task too comprehensive for her strength, could produce such a book as *The Last Man*, there is no reason for doubting her capacity, while in stimulating society and amid inspiring conversation, to reach the imaginative height of *Frankenstein.* To a modern reader, the introductory part, which relates to the Englishmen who met Frankenstein in the Polar seas, seems too long and elaborate; when the story becomes confined to Frankenstein and the monster that he created, the form is as pure as the matter is engrossing. And, unlike most tales of terror, *Frankenstein* is entirely free from anything absurd. The intellectual, no less than the emotional, level is maintained throughout. In Mary Shelley's other principal novels, *Valperga* (1823), a romance of medieval Italy, to which her father Godwin gave some finishing touches, and *Lodore* (1835), a partly autobiographical story, there is clear evidence of a strong imagination and no little power of emotional writing, though both lack sustained mastery.

Frankenstein is founded upon scientific research, as if the time had come when it was necessary to give some rational basis to the terror which novel-readers had been content to accept for its own sake. A later writer, Catherine Crowe, went further than Mary Shelley in this direction. Mrs Crowe not only delighted in ghosts and similar occasions of terror; in *The Night Side of Nature* (1848), she attempted to find a scientific, or, as we should now call it, a 'psychic' explanation of such things; and the result is an engaging volume of mingled story and speculation. In her two novels, *Adventures of Susan Hopley; or Circumstantial Evidence* (1841) and *The Story of Lilly Dawson* (1847), the horrors owe but little to the supernatural. Robberies, murders and abductions are the chief ingredients. Mrs Crowe had some power of imagination, or, rather, perhaps, of ingenuity in spinning tales of crime. But her work is very ragged. She introduces so many characters and so many unrelated episodes, that any skill which she may show in weaving them together at the close of the book comes too late to console the still bewildered reader.

Though the fiction of George Croly deals but little with the supernatural, it has, on one side, a distinct affinity with the novel of terror. The principal aim of his chief novel, *Salathiel* (1829), is to overwhelm the reader with monstrous visions of terror and dismay. The theme of the story is the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans under Titus; and here, as in *Marston* (1846), a romance of the French revolution and the subsequent European warfare, Croly touches, on another side, the historical novelists. But he has not more affinity with Scott than with Mrs Radcliffe. His models are two: Byron, from whom he takes the character of his heroes, persons who do terrific deeds and seldom cease complaining of their dark and tragic fate; and De Quincey, on whom he modelled his prose. Often turgid, often extravagant, often vulgar in its display, like that of his exemplar, Croly's prose not seldom succeeds in impressing the reader by its weight and volume; and he had a large vision of his subject. A dash of humour might have made him a great novelist. Yet it will remain strange that anyone writing historical romances in the heyday of the fame of Walter Scott could write so wholly unlike Scott as did Croly. The difference between them was due partly to a sturdy and pugnacious independence in Croly of which there is much further evidence in his life and writings.

Another cause must be sought for the difference between Scott and George Payne Rainsford James. As a historical novelist, James was a professed follower of Scott. In the preface to the third edition of his first novel, *Richelieu* (1829), James relates how he sent the MS to Scott, who, after keeping it for some months, returned it with a letter full of kindness and encouragement. Without a particle of Scott's genius, James was a quick, patient, indefatigable worker. He poured forth historical novel after historical novel, all conscientiously accurate in historical fact, all dressed in well-invented incident, all diffuse and pompous in style, and all lifeless, humourless and characterless. James fell an easy victim to Thackeray's gift for parody ; but the modern reader will wonder why Thackeray took the trouble to parody James, unless it were that the task was agreeably easy and that James's popularity was worth a shaft of ridicule.

There is far more life and spirit about another author of fiction half-historical, half-terrific, who also owed not a little to the encouragement of Scott. William Harrison Ainsworth has kept some of his popularity, while that of James has faded, because Ainsworth, as little able as was James to unite history with the study of character, had a vigorous imagination and wrote with gusto. *Rookwood* (1834), *Jack Sheppard* (1839), *The Tower of London* (1840), *Guy Fawkes* (1841), *Old St Paul's* (1841), *The Lancashire Witches* (1848), *The South Sea Bubble* (1868): these and others in a very long list of romances can still delight many grown men as well as boys, thanks to their energetic movement and their vivid though rough style of narration.

The coming of Scott did not suffice to divert certain older channels of fiction that were still, if feebly, flowing. And, in the work of Frederick Marryat, a stream that had sprung from Smollett received a sudden access of volume and power. At one time, it was customary to regard captain Marryat as a genial amateur, a sea-captain who wrote sea-stories for boys. The fact that, from 1806 to 1830, Marryat served actively and ably in the navy did not prevent him from being a novelist of very near the first rank. He had little mastery over the construction of plot ; his satire (as exhibited, for instance, in Mr Easy's expositions of the doctrines of liberty) is very thin and shallow. But, in the deft delineation of oddity of character he is worthy of mention with Sterne or with Dickens ; and, in the narration of stirring incident, he was unrivalled in his day. Indeed, excepting Walter Scott, Marryat was the only novelist of his period who might lay claim to eminence. To read the novels of his prime: *Peter Simple* (1834), *Mr Midshipman Easy* (1836), *Japhet in search of a Father* (1836) or *Jacob Faithful* (1834), is to find a rich humour, a wide knowledge of men and things, intense and telling narrative, an artistic restraint which forbids extravagance or exaggeration and an all but Tolstoy-like power over detail. Within his narrower limits, captain Marryat, at his best, is a choicer artist than Defoe, whom, in many points, he resembles—among others, in having had his finest work regarded, for a time, as merely reading 'for boys.' From that implied reproach, Marryat's best novels, like Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, have, ultimately, escaped. Indeed, the stories that Marryat himself intended for boys—*Masterman Ready* (1841), *The Settlers in Canada* (1844) and others—are found to have qualities that make them welcome to grown men. In Marryat, there are touches here and there of the lower humour of Smollett, but these occur almost entirely in his early work, written before he had learned his business as novelist[1]. His mind, moreover, was finer in quality than that of another writer, to whom, doubtless, he owed something, Theodore Hook.

Of Hook's fiction, it is difficult to write. It had a wide influence; and it is of little value. It lacks all the higher qualities, but suggested possibilities to many a later writer. The nine volumes of Hook's novels, *Sayings and Doings* (1826—9), were, in their own day, very popular: to a modern reader, even the best of them, *Gervase Skinner*, seems flimsy, vulgar and trivial. However, there is a lively spirit in them; and Hook's value to English fiction seems to lie in his very freedom and 'modernity.' He reminded fiction—for, indeed, she seemed to have forgotten what Fielding had made clear—that all life was her province. He showed that it was possible to be 'up-to-date,' free (and also easy), without degrading the art; thus, he opened a way to minds like Marryat's which had a truer originality and a fresher vision. Before long, Dickens was to appear, to make supreme use of the lately won liberty.

Before this chapter is brought to a close, two Scottish novelists should not be left without mention. John Galt, in *The Ayrshire Legatees*, *The Entail* and *The Annals of the Parish*, gave admirably minute and real studies of rural life in Scotland, full of strong delineation of character and forcible detail. As imaginative pictures of homely life under perfectly known conditions, Galt's novels occupy an important place in fiction. The fame of the Waverley novels tempted him later to compete with Scott in historical fiction, in which he succeeded but moderately.

David Macbeth Moir wrote for his friend, Galt, the last chapters of a novel, *The Last of the Lairds*, and was the author of *The Life of Mansie Wauch, Tailor in Dalkeith* (1828), a partly satirical, and very amusing, study of humble Scottish character, so shrewdly observed and neatly set down that the reader regrets its interruption by the interpolated romance *The Curate of Suverdsio.*

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[1] In connection with Marryat and the sea-novel two other writers of the time are worth mention: William Nugent Glascock and Frederick Chamier.

The period, as a whole, was productive of no great fiction, and of very little that can be considered first-rate. Neither Scott nor Jane Austen inspired any eminent follower ; and the time, in spite of an immense production of romances and novels, did little more than keep the art of fiction alive till the coming of Dickens and of Thackeray.

CHAPTER XII

THE OXFORD MOVEMENT

The remarkable influence which affected English religion in the middle of the nineteenth century could not have failed to affect English literature. But the one stood apart from the other in a way unusual in English history. At the age of the reformation, at the time of the Laudian movement under Charles I and in the time of the later Caroline divines, religious literature occupied a prominent, sometimes a commanding, position in the eyes of all who were alive to the currents of public life. It is true that the great dramatic literature of Elizabeth's day was concerned very little with the wranglings of divines; but no record of the literary giants of those days could omit the name of Hooker, whose influence on English prose was immense. Jeremy Taylor was a great man of letters, and, in Dryden's day, theological questions were the staple of many a discussion which might appear to belong to pure literature. But the Oxford movement seemed, throughout almost its whole course, to stand apart from the literature of the day. Men went on for a long time thinking and writing in other fields of learning as if there were no such persons as Newman and Keble and Pusey; or, like Carlyle, dismissed them contemptuously from their thoughts as having but the brain of rabbits. Only very gradually was the persistence of their work felt outside religious or academic circles; and, to the end, there was not more than one of their writers who seriously affected the current of English letters. Mark Pattison, long after 'the Tractarian infatuation' had ceased to influence him, complained that there was 'no proper public for either' theology or church history. But, none the less, the Oxford movement, as it came to be called, formed a most important epoch in literature: yet, for a long while it stood apart, as philosophy commonly does, from the ordinary work of men who wrote and men who read.

Nor was it, at least till late in its progress, affected by foreign influences. James Anthony Froude, who, at one time, had run hotfoot with the movement, said, in later life, that its whole history, if not that of the English church, would have been different if Newman had known German; and the extremely superficial generalisation has been widely accepted. It would be more true to say that with the German theology of the period, its theorising, its sentimentalism and its haste, the tractarian leaders had no affinity. Those who knew it, such as Pusey and Hugh James Rose, believed that they saw through and beyond it. The other leaders at least knew what its principles were, and decisively rejected them. Of Italian theology, on the other hand, there was practically none; but the religious aspect of Manzoni's *I promessi Sposi* at one time deeply affected Newman. The great French catholic writers gradually became known to the English leaders. Newman paid great attention to the church in France. French devotional books were translated and edited in great abundance, by Pusey and others, after 1845, and some of the later disciples of the school, such as Liddon, owed a great deal to the French manner and method. But, for the most part, tractarian literature was insular and had its roots deep in the past. The catholic influences which affected it belonged to the early, not the modern, church.

Yet, it is impossible to study the Oxford movement without seeing that it was essentially one with the romantic movement which had re-created the literature of Germany and France.

In France, Chateaubriand's *Génie du Christianisme* had been the signal for a reaction, in the world of letters, in favour of Christianity; and Joseph de Maistre, who had most powerfully supported it, looked on the church of England with considerable favour. Later, the career of Lamennais was followed with great interest in England, and Newman had deep sympathy on many points with Lacordaire. Nor was the movement without its affinities with Germany. The spiritual romanticism of Schiller, and the genius of the great Goethe on its medieval side, appealed, at least through English disciples and copyists, to some of the feelings which gave strength to the Oxford movement. From Goethe to Walter Scott is an easy step: he turned men's minds, said Newman, in the direction of the middle ages, and the Oxford leaders themselves knew how much they owed to the Wizard of the North. Behind their severity there was a vein of noble sentiment akin to his. Keble even, when he traced the influence that Scott had exercised in substituting his manly realities for the flimsy, enervating literature which peopled the shelves of those who read chiefly for amusement, allowed himself to wonder what might have happened if this gifted writer had become the poet of the Church in as eminent a sense as he was the poet of the Border and of Highland chivalry.

The tractarians shared, with Scott at least, the understanding delight in a noble past; and the bizarre and critical genius of Peacock was, also, by their side. The liberalism which he abhorred was to them, too, the great enemy. For a certain political kinship in the early tractarians must not be ignored. Later developments have caused a distinction to be drawn between the liberalism which Keble denounced and the party which, in Gladstone, had for leader one of the most devout disciples of the Oxford movement. But the whigs were believed to be, and historically had been, an anti-church party; and, though the liberalism which the Oxford writers opposed was not actually the whig party, it was, in many of its principles, closely allied to that party, and ultimately absorbed the party's members into its fold and under its name. Tractarianism was certainly not a tory movement, but it was opposed to liberalism in all its aspects; and it soon shed from among its supporters those who, even if, like J. A. Froude, they remained conservative in some political principles, found themselves, when, like Arthur Clough and Mark Pattison, they looked deep into their hearts, to be fundamentally liberal and 'progressive.' To the philosophy of conservatism the Oxford leaders were much indebted. Dean Church says that the Oriel men disliked Coleridge 'as a misty thinker'; but, in the ideas which influenced them, apart from their strictly theological expression, they were undoubtedly, to some extent, his debtors; though Newman recognised that what, to him, were fundamental—'the church, sacraments, doctrines, etc.'—were, to the philosopher, rather symbols than truths. And, in the region of pure poetry, there was much in their thought which was in sympathy with Wordsworth in his loftiest moods.

But all this, though it may illustrate the origin, the character and the affinities of the Oxford movement, tells nothing as to its direct antecedents. Of these, it may suffice to say that the tractarians represented and continued a tradition which, though it had been submerged, had never died: a tradition of unity with the great Caroline divines and the theologians whom they had taken for their models. If this, in churchmanship as well as in literary expression, had become 'high and dry' among those who, in the early nineteenth century, might be regarded as its direct representatives, there were others in whom the continuity of thought is unmistakable. Dean Church says:

> Higher ideas of the Church than the popular and political notion of it, higher conceptions of it than those of the ordinary evangelical theology—echoes of the meditations of a remarkable Irishman, Mr Alexander Knox—had in many quarters attracted attention in the works and sermons of his disciple, Bishop Jebb, though it was not till the movement had taken shape that their full significance was realised[1].

Knox had himself said, in 1816, that 'the Old High Church race is worn out'; and the excellent Thomas Sikes, rector of Guilsborough, set himself to teach a neglectful generation the doctrine of 'one Catholic and Apostolic Church.'

> 'He used to say,' says the biographer of his friend Joshua Watson, 'that wherever he went he saw many signs of earnest minds among the clergy of his time, and those who were then rising into public notice; but whether owing to the security of our civil establishment or a false charity to dissent, one great truth appeared by common agreement to have been suppressed. The Article itself involved ritual, discipline, orders, and sacred ordinances generally, and its exclusion tended to the subversion of all[2].'

And it was this teaching which it was the main work of the writers of *Tracts for the Times* to revive.

> 'We all concurred most heartily,' says one of them, 'in the necessity of impressing on people that the Church was more than a merely human institution; that it had privileges, sacraments, a ministry, ordained by Christ; that it was a matter of the highest obligation to remain united to the Church.'

The date at which the movement definitely began was the month of July 1833. On the 14th, John Keble, fellow of Oriel, professor of poetry, and curate to his father in a little village on the border of the Cotswolds, a man whose academic career had been one of most unusual distinction, preached before the judges of assize at Oxford a sermon on national apostasy, in which he denounced the liberal and Erastian tendencies of the age. He was a tory, no doubt: James Mozley notes how, as poetry professor, he gave a lecture 'proving Homer to be a tory (shall we say conservative?) and finally stating reasons why it was that all real poets were tories.' But the ideas of his sermon were far from political: they were an appeal to the nation on behalf of its very deepest religious needs. And the day on which it was preached was ever kept by Newman as the birthday of the new movement. A few days later, there met at the rectory of Hadleigh in Suffolk a company of like-minded men, under the presidency of the rector, Hugh James Rose, a Cambridge scholar, to whom the Oxonians looked for light and leading—'the one commanding figure and very lovable man that the frightened and discomfited church people were now rallying round.' To him, five years later, Newman dedicated some sermons as to one 'who, when hearts were failing, bade us stir up the gift that was in us and betake ourselves to our true mother.' It may be well to give a brief sketch of the history of the movement thus opened before we consider the position of its leaders in English literature.

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[1] *The Oxford Movement*, pp. 28, 29.

[2] Churton's *Life of Joshua Watson*, I. 51.

An address to the archbishop of Canterbury followed these first steps; and then began in September the issue of *Tracts for the Times*, 'on the privileges of the Church and against Popery and Dissent,' as a private memorandum of advertisement states.

A word as to the prominent members of the party which brought out the tracts. John Keble not only had academic distinction, but was the writer of a book of sacred poems which had won an almost unparalleled success. *The Christian Year* was published anonymously in 1827; but its authorship was no secret. John Henry Newman, also a fellow of Oriel, was vicar of St Mary's, the university, as well as a parish, church at Oxford. He had returned from a holiday, marred by illness, abroad, in the month of the assize sermon and the meeting at Hadleigh. With him had travelled his friend and brother-fellow, Richard Hurrell Froude, who had been Keble's pupil in the Cotswolds. Both felt, as Newman said later, that 'the true and primary author' of the movement was John Keble. Newman was coming to share many of his opinions; Froude was his ardent disciple.

The wanderings in the Mediterranean, undertaken for Froude's health, had been a formative time in the life of Newman. He had left England when the church was threatened with disestablishment by the whig party. 'The bill for the suppression of the Irish sees was in progress,' he said; 'I had fierce thoughts against the liberals.' In the hour of battle, he turned to poetry, and he wrote, while he was away, more than half the poems of his life[1]. At Rome, the two friends began *Lyra Apostolica*, poems contributed to *The British Magazine*, and collected in a single volume in 1836. The ring of battle is in the book.

The Ark of God is in the field,
    Like clouds around, the alien armies sweep;
    Each by his spear, beneath his shield,
In cold and dew the anointed warriors sleep.

. . . .

    Oh dream no more of quiet life[2]!

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[1] About four-fifths, if we exclude *The Dream of Gerontius*. Ward, W., *Life of Newman*, I. 57.

[2] *Lyra Apostolica* [ed. Beeching, H. C., undated], p. 77.

The first of the tracts was Newman's own, *Thoughts on the Ministerial Commission, respectfully addressed to the Clergy*; and all the early tracts sounded the same notes of stress and danger and appeal. Other writers joined, some of them men of great power, and worthy to be leaders in a great cause; but perhaps in Newman and Froude alone was there the indubitable touch of real genius. Of Froude, those who knew him best said, when he had passed away, before the movement had reached more than its initial stages, that 'men with all their health and strength about them might gaze on his attenuated form, struck with a certain awe of wonderment at the brightness of his wit, the intenseness of his mental vision, and the iron strength of his argument.' His *Remains* (1838 and 1839) show the daring of his spirit, the directness, if narrowness, of his vision and the sympathy with which he appreciated the history of the church's past. His analysis and summary of the letters of Becket is remarkable for the time at which it was written and has not a few points of enduring value. In 1834, the tract writers were joined by Edward Bouverie Pusey, regius professor of Hebrew since 1828, a scholar of eminence who was already of great weight in the university and the church. Newman said of his accession to the movement that 'he was able to give a name, a fame, and a personality to what was without him a sort of mob.' Tract no. 18, *Thoughts on the Benefits of the System of Fasting enjoined by our Church* was issued with his initials. Isaac Williams, who was with him and Newman when it was agreed that he should contribute, says that the initials were added to show that he was in no way responsible for the other tracts; but the *Record* newspaper took them as showing his sanction, and the nickname 'Puseyite' was soon affixed to all the writers and their friends, and it stuck.

The tracts were now well launched, and those who wrote them were a coherent body, with common aims and something of a common style in English writing: intensely serious, unaffected, without the slightest ornament or rhetoric, but dignified and, in later issues, reflecting in the language the weight and elaboration of the argument. John William Bowden, William Palmer, Arthur Philip Perceval, Isaac Williams were others who added each a distinctive character to the general impression; and the last of these was a genuine poet and the master of a singularly limpid and attractive prose style.

In a few words, the history of the movement of which the tracts were the chief literary output may be told. A great impetus was given by the preaching of Newman at St Mary's, of which an immortal description exists by John Campbell Shairp, who became principal of the United college at St Andrews and professor of poetry at Oxford. The English church had produced many great preachers since the reformation. Men had hung on the words of Donne, had crowded to hear Stillingfleet and Tillotson; but no man had ever moved others so deeply by such simple means as Newman. All was quiet, restrained, subdued; the voice soft, almost monotonous, the eyes hardly ever lifted from the paper; but old truths were touched into life, when he spoke of 'Unreal Words,' of the 'Individuality of the Soul,' of the 'Invisible World,' and again of 'warfare the condition of victory,' 'the Cross of Christ the measure of the world,' or 'the Christian Church a home for the lonely.' The sermons gave to every cause which Newman supported a following of enthusiastic supporters. In 1836, the strength of the party was shown in the attack on Hampden when he was made regius professor of divinity. Efforts of Roman catholics in England under a new leader (Wiseman) were also met by Newman in lectures on Romanism and popular protestantism; in tract 71, he condemned the Roman form of various Christian doctrines; and the witness of the ancient church was collected in a series, begun in 1836 and lasting some forty years, of translations entitled *Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church, anterior to the Division of East and West.* Yet, other influences were already at work. An important addition to the company of friends proved eventually to be an impulse towards Rome. With Frederick Oakeley and Frederick Faber, came a man of much greater power, William George Ward, fellow of Balliol, a dialectician of extraordinary skill, an ebullient humourist and, as a friend, full of devotion and charm. But the book which had attracted him was the first severe blow the movement received. It was the first two volumes of *Literary Remains of Richard Hurrell Froude* (1838), and its unsparing condemnation of the reformers and the reformation alienated many supporters, alarmed those ignorant of history and turned the mass of the public into bitter opponents. Already, the school of liberalism in theology had attacked the tracts, Arnold using as violent language against 'the Oxford malignants' as was ever used against Wesley, and declaring that their work was to change sense into silliness and holiness into formality and hypocrisy. Still, recruits crowded to the banner of the tractarians. Newman succeeded to the editorship of the famous *British Critic*, a literary magazine whose importance dated from the days of the younger Pitt. It seemed as if the friends stood firmly in conservative ways. Behind them was the figure of that wonderful old scholar, theologian and tory, Martin Joseph Routh (1755—1854), president of Magdalen, reserved, as Newman wrote in 1838, 'to report to a forgetful generation what was the theology of their fathers.' But, already the new accessions had cut into the original movement at an angle, fallen across its line of thought and then set about turning that line in its own direction. Tract 87, by Isaac Williams, *On reserve in communicating religious knowledge*, more by its title, probably—for all who did not read it, and some who did, entirely misunderstood it—than by its contents, alarmed many, and the author was easily defeated when he stood for the Oxford professorship of poetry. It was war now, and war within the field of English letters. Newman, in tract 90, repeated the argument of Sta. Clara in Charles I's time that the XXXIX Articles could not historically be directed against the council of Trent and were at least patient of an interpretation accordant with the theology of the catholic church. Such an argument was familiar enough and could only alarm the ignorant. But this it effectually did. The heads of houses awoke from torpor, and, except the patriarch president of Magdalen, and the rector of Exeter, under the influence of four college tutors (one of whom, Archibald Campbell Tait, of Balliol, lived to become archbishop of Canterbury), condemned the tract in March 1841. Bishops 'charged' against the author, and, at the same time, the English church seemed committed to an agreement with Prussian protestantism in the creation of a bishopric for Jerusalem. And then Newman himself received a serious blow to his own intellectual stability. The confidence of his studies in the history of the early church was abruptly broken by an article in *The Dublin Review*, September 1839, on the Donatists, written by Wiseman, the leader of the new and dominant party among the English Roman catholics. Other points in the story of ancient heresies seemed to him to look the same way. The 'palmary words' of St Augustine, *securus judicat orbis terrarum*, struck him in a new light. The bishops' condemnation weighed heavily on him, and he began to feel that he could not remain in a church which did not allow his sense of the Articles. Early in 1842, he left Oxford and went to live three miles away, but still in his parish, at Littlemore. He resigned his living in September 1843 and withdrew into lay communion. His last sermon, a lament of singular beauty for the church of England, was preached at Littlemore, on 25 September 1843. Already, a sermon by Pusey, which a little knowledge of seventeenth century theology would have shown never to have travelled beyond the limits of the Caroline divines, had been condemned by the heads of houses, without a hearing or any statement of reasons. And, to add to the disasters which beset the tractarians, the irrepressible W. G. Ward published a heavy and exasperating book, *The Ideal of a Christian Church.* He gloried in the 'most joyful, most wonderful, most unexpected, sight! we find the whole cycle of Roman doctrine gradually possessing numbers of English churchmen.' On 13 February 1845, the movement reached its crisis at Oxford. Convocation, attended by more than a thousand members of the university, the most famous as well as the most obscure, condemned the book and deprived the author of his degrees. A proposal to censure tract 90 was defeated by the veto of the proctors. The scene, of passion and humour and snowballs, has often been described; and Edward Freeman, in later years the historian of the Norman conquest, set it to verse after the style of Macaulay's *Virginia.* It was, as R. W. Church, then junior proctor, wrote in after years, 'not only the final defeat and conclusion of the first stage of the movement. It was the birthday of the modern Liberalism of Oxford.' On 9 October, Newman was received into the church of Rome.

From that moment, the story ceases to be picturesque or passionate. Those in whom the original principles of the Oxford leaders had been firmly rooted, Keble and Pusey, Isaac Williams and Charles Marriott, Richard Church and James Mozley, remained to teach to the next generation the doctrines for which they had suffered. The movement took its place in the history of the English church.

It passed away from Oxford. Part of its influence went Romewards with Newman. Part remained, with the two stalwarts among its first leaders, to leaven the life of the whole church of England. Keble died in 1866, having written nothing which achieved the popularity of *The Christian Year*; but, till the last there remained much of the grace and sober sweetness of his early manner in all that he wrote. Pusey lived till 16 September 1882, when he had survived all his first associates, except Newman, and most of their first disciples. Year by year, he produced books of massive learning and unbending orthodoxy. Lord chancellor Selborne said of him that 'he was a power in the Church of England greater than Archbishop or Bishop for more than half a century.' Theological literature which issued from the press under his name as author or editor or with his *imprimatur* found a ready market. So long as he lived there was still something of a theological public, as there had been in the days of the Caroline divines. And, in the Roman obedience, and created a cardinal in 1879, Newman lingered on till 1890, having almost ceased to write. When he died, the literary influence he had represented was at its last gasp.

It is difficult, while the controversies in which the Oxford writers were protagonists are still scarce cold, to estimate the position which the movement will occupy in English literature. In manner, expression, tone, the twentieth century presents a piquant contrast to the severity of sixty years ago. If theologians still think seriously, they are wont to write flippantly. To the tractarians, the manner reflected the solemnity of the matter with which they were concerned. Pusey, whose learning and stability far surpassed that of any of his contemporaries in the arena, cared nothing for grace of expression, achieved lucidity not without an effort, but was the heir of the dignity of the ancient divines. He was a master of serried argument, repeating his blows as with a hammer, cogent, cumulative, compelling, if not convincing, to assent, rarely epigrammatic, never concise. He was mainly a preacher, a commentator, a minister to individual souls, surpassingly sincere, profoundly erudite, piercingly appellant. Nor was the range of his survey limited. He could pass easily from Semitic scholarship to constitutional history, from French pietism to social reforms: on each subject, he was an expert. His style, like his mind, was eminently traditional and conservative. He denounced the doctrine that the original of government was with the people, and 'the so-called social compact,' with as much determination as he defended the symbol of Chalcedon or the rights and claims of the poor. And the language in which he expressed all this was the language of an Elizabethan without its elasticity or a Caroline without its quaintness. He was no pedant for pure English, still less for the vocabulary of a pedagogue reared upon the classical tongues. There seems no art in his sentences, and yet it is not true that there is none. But, what art there is is only that of taking pains—not, like Newman, to say a thing in the best as well as the clearest way in which it can be said, but only to say it so that it is certain to be understood. So, he is found sometimes writing sentences as short and trenchant as Macaulay's; yet, far more often, you will come across one in which, without hesitation, he has extended his meaning to nearly four hundred words. His style, eminently, was one that had its best effect when read aloud. Often a phrase is pungent and arresting: rarely does a sentence linger in the memory. But the power and weight that belong to his greatest efforts is indubitable. For sheer solemnity, pathos and grandeur, there was nothing in the century in which he lived that surpassed the two sermons preached, the one in 1843, before, and the cause of, his suspension, and the other in 1846, on the resumption of 'this my office among you,' of which he had been deprived. The sentences at the beginning of the second are characteristic:

> It will be in the memory of some that when, nearly three years past, Almighty God (for 'secret faults' which He knoweth, and from which, I trust, He willed thereby the rather to 'cleanse' me), allowed me to be deprived for a time of this my office among you, I was endeavouring to mitigate the stern doctrine of the heavy character of a Christian's sins, by pointing out the mercies of God which might reassure the penitent, the means of his restoration, the earnests of his pardon. And in so doing, it seemed best, first to dwell upon the unfathomable mercies of God in Christ, the exhaustless abyss of mercy in the Infinite Fountain of Mercy;—when it is not finally shut out, Infinite as Himself, as being poured out from His Infinity; and then, more directly, on all those untold and ineffable mercies contained in the intercession of our Lord, at the Right Hand of God, for us. For so, I hoped, would the hearts of penitents be the more fixed upon Him, the Source of all mercies, and their faith be strengthened, and they the more hope that no depth of *past* sin could utterly sever them from the love of Christ; nay, could sever them from no degree of fulness of His unspeakable love[1].

Primarily, what he wrote bears the impress of his deep devotion. Whether he wrote about religion or not, what he wrote was religious. But, secondarily, all his writings bore the mark of his indomitable and tenacious spirit. And all that he wrote was balanced, proportionate, sensitive to distinctions, receptive of truths new and old. The very character of all the tractarians was sincerity, and most conspicuously of all did this belong to Pusey. When others left their old moorings he remained firmly anchored to the past of the church. He foresaw the dark future, but he stayed himself on the things of old. When others looked only on England, his view extended beyond, to the country whence he espied a coming danger. He foresaw that what he had seen in Germany would come to his own land. 'This will all come upon us in England, and how utterly unprepared we are!' But then, as he said, he was in the English church by the providence of God; and there he found all that he needed, though not all, perhaps, that he could desire. And thus, to him, the Oxford movement was only a call upon the succours of the past. As he wrote more than forty years after the first tract—

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[1] *Entire Absolution of the Penitent: A Sermon*, 1846, pp. 1, 2.

> When we were awakened, the Revival was wholly from within. We did not open a Roman book. We did not think of them. Rome was quiet at that time in itself. It was only, for political ends, assimilating itself as much as it could to us. 'We must own,' Cardinal Wiseman said, 'that we have been a little ashamed of our special doctrines.' However, we had all which we wanted within our Church. We had the whole range of Christian doctrine, and did not look beyond, except to the Fathers, to whom our Church sent us. One, of whom I thought far more than myself, said, 'We have range enough in those before us, to whatever the pigmies may grow[1].'

It was Keble, no doubt, whom Pusey thus quoted. And Keble, like Pusey, and far more than Newman, had his roots in the past.

If Pusey's name was given to the followers of the movement, it was, unquestionably, Keble who gave it its first popularity. His sermon inaugurated it, and its principles were those of *The Christian Year.* That book, said Newman once, laughingly, was the *fons et origo mali.* And in it we see the nature of the influence which the movement exercised, not only upon theology, but upon literature. Here, again, is the note of sincerity, first and foremost: sincerity which means purity, also, and

The princely heart of innocence.

But sincerity, with Keble, does not mean narrowness. Dean Stanley said of *The Christian Year* that it had 'a real openness of mind for the whole large view of the Church and the world.' It could hardly be otherwise with the work of a writer who was steeped in the ancient classic literatures and had a deep sympathy with nature as well as human life. And the result is a poetic vision of the sacredness of life, in town and country, in art and labour, in literature as well as prayer. Nature, to the poet, is a sacrament of God. And its appeal has no need to be heightened beyond what the poet feels himself: the mark of his art is its veracity. He writes exactly as he thinks. But he thinks in the manner of the early nineteenth century, and the manner sometimes prevents the thought from reaching in clear directness the generations of later time. A simple thought is not always expressed in simple style. Keble's poetry is eminently literary and reminiscent: it is the work of a well-read—almost a too well-read—man. And the memory now and again goes near to quench the inspiration. *The Christian Year* is, eminently, a book of its own period, as that period was seen by one who, most of all, was a scholar and a saint. And Keble was, besides, a preacher and a critic. If his sermons cannot be placed in that rank which Newman alone of the nineteenth century preachers can claim to have reached, they have, at least, one conspicuous merit—at least in his later volumes—their absolute directness and simplicity. He spoke, first and foremost, so as to be understood by everyone, and yet from such a height of personal experience that, as one said who heard him, you seemed to be amidst the rustling of angels' wings. The preaching of the tractarians, like that of the Caroline divines, was eminently doctrinal, yet it did not abandon the direct morality of the eighteenth century; it rather raised it, by the conjunction, to a higher power. As a critic, Keble has sympathy and depth, dictated by the central thoughts which ruled his life. Poetry, in its essence, was, to him, simply religion; and the best poets in every age and every country had been those who have had the highest thoughts about God. It may be that the lectures he delivered, written, as they were, in the choice Latin of which he was a master, will never be read again; but there were thoughts in them which have passed into the common stock of criticism; and dean Church declared that they were 'the most original and memorable course ever delivered from the Chair of Poetry in Oxford.'

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[1] Pusey's *Spiritual Letters*, p. 239.

The influence which Keble exercised upon others is illustrated most conspicuously in the life of Isaac Williams, who came to Trinity as a bright Welsh lad interested in his books and his play, but hardly at all in religion. Latin verse brought him to the notice of the poetry professor, and he became his pupil in the lovely village between Thames and Cotswold, where 'the most distinguished academic of his day' ministered to a few country folk with as much zeal as others would bestow on labours the most anxious and exciting. He came into a new world of intense reality and, no less, of engrossing charm. He saw—again to quote the historian of the movement—

> this man, who had made what the world would call so great a sacrifice, apparently unconscious that he had made any sacrifice at all, gay, unceremonious, bright, full of play as a boy, ready with his pupils for any exertion, mental or muscular—for a hard ride, or a crabbed bit of Aeschylus, or a logic fence with disputatious and paradoxical undergraduates, giving and taking on even ground[1].

And Keble made a man of him. Isaac Williams was a true poet, who, it may be, has not yet come into his own. The fire of the Celt burst forth in many a lament for the past, and prayer for the future, of the church, which it became his passion, in utter self-effacement, to serve. *The Cathedral* (1838) contains verse, inspired, no doubt, in form by Scott and, sometimes, by Wordsworth, which has not a little of the romance and enthusiasm of the Wizard of the North. The ancient church of Wales, the church which he came to serve in England, the church which was that of Basil and Ambrose, Gregory and Clement, Cyprian and Chrysostom, was, to him, the centre of life: and he was content to abide with it in unostentatious work, doing each day's duty without recognition or reward. That is the note of his poetry and his prose: it lights the fire of the one, it dictates the grey sedateness of the other. When he compared English uses with 'the richer dress her southern sisters own,' he was content with what might seem 'the homelier truth.' He turned back from the breviary to the prayer book:

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[1] Church, R. W., *The Oxford Movement*, p. 60.

The chorister
That sings the summer nights, so soft and strong,
To music modulating his sweet throat,
Labours with richness of his varied note,
Yet lifts not unto Heaven a holier song,
Than our home bird that, on some leafless thorn,
Hymns his plain chaunt each wintry eve and morn[1].

His poetry knows little of the technical mastery which belonged to that of Keble, but, in genuine feeling, it was surpassed by none of his contemporaries. And it is this which makes his *Autobiography*, next to Newman's *Apologia*, the most fascinating record of the time which any of the leaders bequeathed to posterity. In it, every phase of the movement as it appealed to one of the chief disciples is recorded without a touch of exaggeration, with no *arrière-pensée*, no attempt to justify, still less to conceal, any of his thoughts, or aims, or experiences. It explains the attractiveness of Newman, the devotion of his followers, the sincerity of their principles, the tragedy of their separation. If it has not the art or the pathos of Newman's *Apologia*, it is a picture even more truthful, though but a picture in little, of the days of storm and stress in which the movement was shaped which transformed the English church into a new and living influence on men. When Williams became Newman's curate at St Mary's, he was struck by the contrast to the school in which the Kebles had trained him. He found Newman 'in the habit of looking for effect, and for what was sensibly effective.' This, which is true, without any hint of censure, of Newman's work as a religious teacher, left its impress on all that he wrote. With all the genius of the poet and the preacher, with all the severity and simplicity of the Oxford school which he led, Newman was yet, to the fingertips, and to the end of his life, an artist, and an incomparable master of his art. Hardly yet can his literary be severed from his personal and religious influence; but already two, at least, of his works have come to be ranked among the classics. His *Apologia pro vita sua* was written in 1864 in answer to an offensive and unprovoked slander from Charles Kingsley. An accusation that truth for its own sake had never been a virtue with the Roman catholic clergy was supplemented by a gratuitous mention of Newman, and, for this, the only substantiation offered was a reference to a sermon delivered when the preacher was still ministering in the English church. Newman showed that the sermon contained no words that could possibly express such a meaning. Kingsley, the most honest and fearless of men, yet would not make an honest withdrawal, and Newman, with just relentlessness, exposed him to the derision of the world. The exposure was completed by an intimate account of the mental history of the man who had been maligned. Between April and June, Newman put out an *Apologia*, in seven parts, which should vindicate himself and show his countrymen what manner of man he was. 'False ideas may be refuted by argument, but by true ideas alone are they expelled. I will vanquish,' he said, 'not my accuser, but my judges.' And this he did in a wonderful way. He sat down and wrote day and night—his fingers, as he said, walking nearly twenty miles a day—just as he felt, thought and remembered, often weeping as he wrote, but triumphantly achieving such a record as few men have ever made, so sincere, so thorough, or so convincing. From the day when his *Apologia* was published, Newman won a place in the heart of his countrymen of whatever religion or whatever politics, which he never lost till he passed away thirty years later in an honoured old age. The supreme merit of his *Apologia*, no doubt, is its directness. Every page seems as if it were rather spoken than written. It has the merits of a letter rather than of a book. It seems to represent without omission or concealment the whole mind of the writer. And yet it is a piece of finished art, not conscious but inevitable, because the writer had become, half—perhaps altogether—unwittingly, a supreme artist. He could not write in any other way than as an artist: his art had become to him a second nature. Thus, then, when the English of his *Apologia* is recommended as a model, and as characteristic of its age and the tractarian movement, it must be remembered that its simplicity is largely the result of a long and strenuous mental discipline acting upon a singularly brilliant and sensitive spirit. Newman writes as nature looks; but it is not given to others, in untaught simplicity, to write as he wrote. The training ground of his *Apologia* was the long series of sermons, delivered week by week, saint's day by saint's day, at St Mary's, Oxford. Their simplicity seems even more certain than that of the personal vindication which followed them after twenty years. Their English is simple, clear and refreshing as pure water; answering to every changing thought of the speaker's mind. The thought is as limpid as the language. There had been nothing like them in the English pulpit: the nearest approach was bishop Wilson, yet in him still lingered the savour of the old divines who, undoubtedly, said what they meant, yet relished it as it was said. Newman never seems to taste what he is saying, nor to write with any look backward at himself: he only speaks straight home. Yet all this would have been impossible, his unique and wonderful style would not have been created, if he had not been both a student and a musician and had not, almost all his life long written thrice over everything that he intended to preserve. The ancient classics, the fathers in their solemn searching severity, the unearthly music of the violin—these taught him the mastery of language and to know when he had mastered it to express every vibration of his thought. Of his teachers in English literature, only two were prominent, Southey, whom he 'worshipped,' and Crabbe, from whom he unconsciously learnt more than any other master, in power to register, remember and reproduce a single impression in single-minded words. And, ever at the background, a spirit which dominates but finds no complete expression which frail humanity can grasp, is the majestic infinity which sounds in the symphonies of Beethoven. In his later sermons, especially in *Sermons for Mixed Congregations* (1850), his style was much more ornate, his eloquence less restrained, with an extraordinary vividness of description and appeal. He became more rhetorical, more obviously aiming at effect, with less of English reticence and with a vehemence more Italian or French.

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[1] *The Cathedral*, 1841 edn, p. 21.

Next to Newman's *Sermons* and his *Apologia*, no doubt *The Dream of Gerontius*, the vision, half dream, half inspiration, of the beginnings of a world beyond this life, is his most direct appeal. Swinburne recognised 'the force, the fervour, the terse energy' in its verse: and it has that mark of genius, like the finest parts of Shakespeare, that poor and rich, learned and ignorant, are alike carried away by its attraction. There are immortal lines in it, and it is no temerity to predict that 'Praise to the Holiest,' like 'Lead kindly Light,' will never be forgotten, the one a profound theology in words like classic marble, the other a passionate cry of individual struggle and self-conquest.

In the rest of Newman's work there is an obvious division drawn by his submission to the see of Rome. Yet there is little apparent difference in his manner of writing. He never surpassed, in the way of pure exposition, the clarity and distinction of his style in *Lectures on the Prophetical Office of the Church* (1837). But, later books were, at least at the time of their publication, more generally influential, notably *The Scope and Nature of University Education* (1852), *The Grammar of Assent* (1870) and perhaps, also, the earlier *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (1845). This last, begun while he was still in the English church, became a justification of his secession. It explained how modern Rome, widely different from the church of the Fathers, could yet claim to represent the original Christianity, not as identical but as consistent with it, as being in fact the full fruit of which the seed only was seen at first. In his theory, Newman was not so far away from the Darwinism which was to exert a far greater influence on English thought, and he certainly expressed the heart of the science of comparative religion. Something of the same kind may be said of lectures on *University Education.* They represent, if they do not indeed anticipate, some of the most powerful ideas of the later nineteenth century in regard to the true functions of a university and the motive force of university reform. Knowledge for its own sake, as enlargement of the mind, is the object of a university education; but such knowledge is impossible apart from a theology. All knowledge is, ultimately, a defence of the Christian faith. A university is, must be, impartial; but it can only be impartial if it includes theology in the sciences which it studies. *The Grammar of Assent* carried the argument of probability, the corner-stone of his master Butler, on to new ground. The argument was, to him, 'an accumulation of probabilities,' and he reached these by a study of the mental processes which lead to apprehension and assent. 'In any enquiry about things in the concrete,' he wrote, 'men differ from each other not so much in the soundness of their reasoning as in the principles which govern its exercise,' and those principles were not general but personal. 'The validity of proof is determined not by any scientific test but by the illative sense.' It is easy to relate such thoughts as these to much later philosophy, both English and German. And, in fact, what is characteristic of all Newman's writing is that form of genius which seizes upon the floating tendencies of nascent thought and points the way towards unforeseen conclusions.

It is only within very narrow limits that Newman's thought here or elsewhere can ever be called reactionary. No doubt he, as one of the latest and clearest of his critics and admirers has said, had, indeed, an 'abhorrence of doctrinal liberalism.' In 1835, he vigorously protested against 'the introduction of rationalistic principles into revealed religion' in a tract which described rationalism as 'a certain abuse of reason; that is, a use of it for purposes for which it never was intended and is unfitted,' and 'a rationalistic spirit' as 'the antagonist of Faith; for Faith is, in its very nature, the acceptance of what our reason cannot reach, simply and absolutely upon testimony.' But it has of recent years again and again been asserted that he was the intellectual parent of a modernism which he would have abhorred. A partial study of his writings might give some ground for such a view: a complete one refutes it. It could, indeed, hardly be held by any who did not, perhaps unconsciously, identify the wider catholicism of orthodox Christianity with the narrower presentment of it in modern Roman theology which Newman never set himself very seriously to defend. His intellectual standpoint, however much during his long life it may seem to have varied, never really departed from the three bases on which it had been founded. He was an Aristotelian. He distrusted much of modern metaphysic. He regarded the actual facts of human life as the ultimate basis of reason. He was, like many of the most earnest English thinkers of his time, a convinced disciple of Butler. His reading of *The Analogy of Religion* was, as he said, an era in his religious opinions. Starting from probability as the guide of life, he never fancied that the limitless area of things human and divine could be fully mapped or the ultimate mystery more than 'imperfectly comprehended.' But he found reality in the religious facts of the world, as the philosophers of his time found them in the moral facts, and the men of science in the physical; and, herein, he may be said to have anticipated modern psychology. Yet also, and with at least as much strength, he was a historian: very often, not an accurate historian in detail, but a historian of illumination and genius. If much that he wrote as history has long been cast aside, the interpretation that he gave of early—not the earliest—Christian centuries remained as an inspiration to the students who made Oxford history famous, to Stubbs and Freeman, Creighton and Bryce, and remains still. When he wrote his different studies he was loyal to his principles, whether, at the time, he was an English or a Roman churchman, but he never surrendered the scholar's independence. No doubt, he loved narration more than interpretation, character more than institutional life; but, what he wanted to find, and believed he could find, in history was truth: and in that he never deserted the fundamental principle of the tractarian company. As a historian, his affinities were with the French school which was coming into existence in his middle age, never with the purely German, where vast collections of facts were often used to support an unverifiable theory. But, if his passion throughout was catholicism, his preconception was truth.

Newman must ever remain the central figure in the literature of the movement of which he was the most conspicuous figure. But Pusey, it would be true to say, represented far more entirely its most prominent characteristics: its basis in history and tradition, its *via media*, its determination *stare super antiquas vias*. And it may well be that, if Newman appealed to the wider circle, Pusey and Keble influenced more directly the general literature of English religion. The Oxford movement certainly belongs to the history of English religion more definitely than to the history of English literature; but it had great influence, outside its own definite members, on the literary taste of its age. It spoke from the first for a certain purity, directness and severity of style: later, the historical influences which attached themselves to it, through the study of ancient legends, and liturgies, and hymns, produced a richer vein of prose, a more florid touch in poetry. No one can think that Tennyson was wholly unmoved by its manner; but Dolben and Pater were the undoubted issue of its later life. If one were to look for men of letters who were as clearly such, and would have been in any age, as they were men of religion, one would light instantly on the names of Richard William Church and Richard Chenevix Trench. The former, a fellow of Oriel with Newman, one of the proctors who vetoed the new test proposed when Ward was condemned, died as dean of St Paul's. Church lived to be the historian of the movement itself, and perhaps that was his finest work. But his deep thought and profound wisdom, which had remarkable weight with the eminent statesmen of his day, were seen at their best in his interpretation of past history as well as in lectures and sermons which are models of clear writing and clear thought. Something of the severity and unworldliness of Dante, of whom he was a devoted student, seemed to have descended upon him, with, also, the great Florentine's knowledge of the ways and thoughts of common men. But, most clearly, he was, in literature, the disciple of Newman, in the simplicity, directness and absence of ornament which made his style powerful in its effect on the writing of his generation. Church was a preacher, a moralist, a historian; but, especially, he was a student of human nature, who judged men equally yet with sympathy, who weighed motives in scales which were never deflected by prejudice or passion, and knew to a nicety the springs of human action. He was a master of sympathetic literary criticism, too, as his volume on Spenser proves. His historical sketches, such as that of the early middle age, and his criticisms in literature, such as those of Cassiodorus and Pascal, show a characteristic simplicity which cannot veil the abundance of knowledge. Occasionally, something is revealed of the fire within him, which breaks out now and again in his classic memorial of the Oxford movement and the men who began and led it, a record, as he wrote to Lord Acton,

> that one who lived with them, and lived long beyond most of them, believed in the reality of their goodness and height of character, and still looks back with deepest reverence to those forgotten men as the companions to whose teaching and example he owes an infinite debt, and not he only but religious society in England of all kinds[1].

Preeminently, Church was a man of letters; and this was as obviously true of Richard Chenevix Trench. Church noted 'the peculiar combination in him of the poet, the theologian and the champion of primitive and catholic doctrine.' Some of his lyrics belong to the highest flight of English poetry. His religious writings had a peculiar distinction and charm. Just as Church owed inspiration to Greece, modern as well as ancient, and its struggle for liberty, so Trench had nourished himself on the great literature of Spain and was in harmony with the aspirations of her liberal revival. He passed, in 1863, from the deanery of Westminster to the archbishopric of Dublin, where he was primate at the disestablishment and fought hard for the ancient symbols of the Irish church under its new constitution. Like the dean of St Paul's, he was not a militant tractarian, but he spoke of Hugh James Rose as 'my master,' and wrote, on the death of Pusey, that 'a prince in our Israel has indeed passed away.' The names of Church and Trench, which, even apart from their theological writings, and at any time in our history, would have been prominent in English letters, are examples of the influence which the serious ideas of the Oxford movement exercised upon literature.

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[1] Quoted in the 'Advertisement' to *The Oxford Movement*, p. vi.

In historical study, the influence was no less conspicuous. William Stubbs, the greatest English historian of the nineteenth century, was a convinced tractarian and spoke of Pusey, whom he assisted in literary work, as 'the master.' Henry Parry Liddon, the greatest preacher of the period, whose sermons at St Paul's were, for twenty years, a conspicuous factor in the life of London, was the disciple, the friend and the biographer of Pusey. His Bampton lectures on the Divinity of Christ were worthy to rank with the great dogmatic treatises of the older divines. And their successors remain to the present day.

Not far apart from them, yet still somewhat in isolation, was the striking figure of John Mason Neale, not an Oxford but a Cambridge man. He was antiquary, historian, poet, novelist, priest; and in none of these activities can he be forgotten. He was as facile as he was learned. He poured forth book after book of amazing erudition on almost every conceivable subject of theological and historical interest. As a translator of Latin and Greek hymns no Englishman has surpassed him. But, above all things, he loved 'a story' and he could tell it—as such an historical novel as *Theodora Phranza*, which tells the fall of Christian Constantinople, evidences—with the best of them. While his knowledge was diffused, that of James Bowling Mozley was intense and concentrated. Master of a stern and somewhat arid style, which still could rise into eloquence and passion, he exercised a profound influence on the generation which succeeded him. He was the foe of shallow thinking and shallow writing. Many of the idols of the market-place, past or present, from Martin Luther to Thomas Carlyle, suffered his swashing blows. His brother Thomas had abilities of a more popular cast: he was, for a while, editor of *The British Critic*: for many years he was a leader writer for *The Times*, and he represented that paper at Rome during the time of the council 1869—70, when his letters, unsympathetic though Roman catholics have complained that they are, presented a most vivid and remarkable picture of a great historical episode. In his old age, he wrote *Reminiscences* of the days of struggle, which are entertaining, but not always accurate. 'If a story cannot stand on two legs,' said Newman, whose sister he had married, 'Tom supplies a third.' From him comes a touching tribute to the self-effacing labours of Charles Marriott, like himself a fellow of Oriel, who was the helper of every one, great and small, who belonged to the movement, and its great stay in scholarship, as editing with Keble and Pusey *The Oxford Library of the Fathers.*

Outside Oxford, the same interests which had awakened the ecclesiastical learning and catholic orthodoxy of the university were represented in many writers who were affected, in greater or less degree, by the principles of the tractarians.

Walter Farquhar Hook was one of the most masterful figures of his time, first as vicar of Leeds for twenty-two years and then as dean of Chichester. He accepted nearly all the principles of the tractarians, but frequently stood apart from their expression and was often a vehement critic. He was an industrious compiler of dictionaries and biographies, without sufficient research or originality to give them permanent vitality. His successor at Chichester, John William Burgon, held a similar position of independent judgment. He was a keen and biting controversialist and the most conservative of biblical critics; but he had an intense love of 'good men,' among whom he placed some of the authors of the tracts. His biographies are essential to a knowledge of the movement.

Two sons of the famous statesman and philanthropist, and brothers of that bishop of Oxford who revolutionised the ideal of English episcopacy, Robert Isaac and Henry William Wilberforce, both at Oriel, passed into the Roman church. The elder had been an archdeacon and yet had written theological books of real value, notably one on *The Doctrine of The Incarnation,* which was on strictly tractarian lines and won great fame. The younger after his secession gave important help to the Roman catholic cause in the press.

Some of those who had abandoned their orders and left the English church seemed eager to disclaim any connection with it. Some vehemently attacked what they had before as vehemently defended, but no one of them save Newman made any great mark in literature. Some were content with a change of clothes, substituting for their customary suits of solemn black the vagaries of 'blue ties and ginger-coloured trousers.'

More formidable was the Anglo-Roman hierarchy created in 1850, whose head announced its creation by a letter 'from out the Flaminian Gate.'

Nicholas Wiseman, Roman catholic controversialist and cardinal, whose education had not been English, was a capable craftsman in letters. He was an orientalist, and a cultured student of many subjects, who became the first archbishop of Westminster in 1850, after devoting himself to confuting 'High Church Claims' (1841), and embodying his theories of church history in a pretty story called *Fabiola, or the Church of the Catacombs* (1854). Henry Edward, cardinal Manning, who had been an English archdeacon and became Wiseman's successor, wrote, while he was a member of the English church, volumes of sermons which reached at least a fifth edition, and, as a controversial papalist, many vehement criticisms of the Anglican position; but, though his personal influence was great, his work is negligible as literature. John Hungerford Pollen, as an English priest wrote the most touching and tragic of all the records of struggle in parish work for tractarian principles (*A Narrative of Five Years at St Saviour's, Leeds,* 1851), and then, as a Romanist layman, devoted himself to art, wrote some valuable lectures, was the friend of Morris and Rossetti, Swinburne and Patmore, and became in artistic literature, what his friend Baron von Hügel said he was in life, 'the perfect type of *l'homme du monde.*' Another convert, Frederick William Faber, endowed with high gifts of imagination, deplored, as a Roman catholic, the position of the Magi, with, perhaps, an undercurrent of reference to the protestants' unhappy lot—

> No Pope, no blessèd Pope had they
> To guide them with his hand,—

and was generally sentimental and sugary, very unlike the tractarians; but he wrote some devotional poetry of sincerity and pathos. John Dobree Dalgairns was capable and solid as a Roman controversialist on behalf of Christian belief; but he was far surpassed by another of the later disciples of the tractarians who became a power in the church of his adoption. William George Ward, the crisis of whose stormy career was critical also in the movement itself, has won immortality in the verse of Tennyson and the prose of dean Church. The latter finds it his chief distinction that as 'a profound metaphysical thinker he was the equal antagonist on their own ground of John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer.' His work hardly belongs to pure literature: its manner and method are, for the most part, cumbrous, only occasionally vivid or comprehensive. His own generation read what he wrote because he was famous for what he said: it was meat and drink to him to argue and to chop logic, and his swordplay was a delight to the onlookers. But, if his *Ideal*, his intuitionist philosophy and his controversial treatises are forgotten, he will ever be remembered by the poet's farewell to him as one

> Whose Faith and Work were bells of full accord,
> My friend, the most unworldly of mankind,
> Most generous of all Ultramontanes, Ward.

Ambrose Phillips de Lisle, another English convert to the Roman obedience, followed the *Tracts for the Times* with keenest interest from the first. He had been ten years a Roman catholic when they began to appear and he set himself before long to correspond with their writers in the hope of 'producing a good understanding between the Catholic and Anglican churches, with a view to the ultimate restoration of that happy and blessed unity, which formerly existed between them for more than a thousand years, and which,' he added, 'I am perfectly certain will one day be restored.' The letters which passed between him and Montalembert illustrate how close at some points was the connection between the ecclesiastical revival in England and in France. The French man of letters had no hope

> that Catholicity will make any real progress in England, as long as the fanatical spirit of Archbishop Manning, Mr Ward, and others of the same stamp is prevalent among English Catholics[1];

and, on the other side, Newman was equally hopeless about reunion or 'the conversion of that corporate body which we call the Anglican Church.' De Lisle's own work, sympathetic in aim, trivial in result, is an example of the rift between the two bodies, in literature as well as in religion. Only in Newman himself was the influence of the Oxford movement to be discerned among Romanist writers.

But the glamour of tractarian theology extended far beyond those who were its first teachers or their direct heirs. It created a religious literature effective if ephemeral: it 'tuned the pulpits' for some half a century to a gravity which strove, often successfully, after the majesty of classical sculpture. And, in the poetry of Digby Mackworth Dolben, only recently given to the world, and of Christina Rossetti, it formed a new life exuberant and aflame. Dolben pursued its teaching till it yielded to him a certain medieval richness of ecclesiastical imagery that touched at many points a religious passion which was older than Christianity, and almost hostile to it. To Christina Rossetti, the catholic theology of the English church was the very breath of life, and she accepted its sternness without dispute. Yet, while the accent of severity clings to all she wrote, we are, in her company, on the road to a reaction which yet has its roots in the past: the splendour of Jeremy Taylor is not forgotten and the exotic richness of Walter Pater is in sight.

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[1] Purcell, E., *Life of Ambrose Phillips de Lisle*, vol. II, p. 360.

In humbler literature, 'tractarianism' may be thought to have created an epoch by inaugurating the dreary succession of religious novels. But they were not dreary in their beginnings. J. M. Neale was a great writer of romance. Newman himself put some very good polemical work into *Loss and Gain* (with an immortal description of an Oxford tutor's breakfast) and *Callista*. Wiseman's *Fabiola* was an effort of the same kind. Francis Edward Paget, student of Christ Church and then rector of Elford, published a series of most interesting tales, containing quite delicious descriptions of country life and character which no novelist of his time surpassed. But most prominent of all was the long line of stories, exquisite in domestic portraiture, strong in moral power, keen in understanding of character and touched with a gracious humour, which issued from the parish of Hursley—where Keble was to the authoress a true guide, philosopher and friend—and were the work of Charlotte M. Yonge. *The Heir of Redclyffe* and *The Little Duke* have their place in English literature. They have had many imitators and successors but few rivals, unless *John Inglesant* may claim to be of their company.

A movement which had so many means of making itself felt throughout the country had, naturally, an influence in many phases of literature. It was primarily religious, with a religion, said one of its lay disciples, an eminent public official, 'which was fervent and reforming in essentials with a due reverence for existing authorities and habits and traditions'; but it was not narrow or cloistered, it was 'a religion which did not reject, but aspired to embody in itself, any form of art and literature, poetry, philosophy, and even science which could be pressed into the service of Christianity[1].'

But its permanent effects may be seen most clearly in the fields of history and dogma. During the eighteenth century, the constant study of the Fathers of the early church which had been the basis of the theological writings of the reformers and the Caroline divines had passed into desuetude. In the seventeenth century, no one would have dared to write theology without quoting long passages of crabbed Latin and obscure Greek. In the eighteenth century, the habit had gone entirely out of fashion, and Wesley, scholar though he was, was the last man in the world to wish for its revival. But, while the tractarians were in their cradles, Routh of Magdalen had recalled to the church of England the thought of the rock whence it was digged, by the publication of the first part of his *Reliquiae Sacrae* (1814), in which he collected the fragments of early Christian writings up to the first Nicene council and edited them with a remarkable combination of affection, erudition and sagacity. He set the tone for the Oxford writers. Theology and history were inseparable. Accuracy was all important. 'Verify your quotations' was the first duty of a scholar. The real teaching of Christianity would be found, in balanced emphasis, if you went back far enough for it. And that was the motto of the tractarians. Christian dogma was inseparable from true history. That was a far-reaching principle, fruitful long after the tractarians had ceased to work.

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[1] *Letters of Lord Blachford*, p. 15.

CHAPTER XIII

THE GROWTH OF LIBERAL THEOLOGY

Religious thought has seldom been so stagnant in England as at the opening of the nineteenth century. The professional advocates of the Christian faith did not lack ability, but they had been traversing the same arid ground of external evidences for half a century. They continued to put the apostles into the witness box and acquit them according to the rules of the Old Bailey. They cross-examined the saints for their attestation of miracle and prophecy, but omitted to discover the secret of their life. A Paley or a Watson might display admirable commonsense, and be accounted by the faithful a match for Tom Paine; and yet the religious life remained starved. The methodist movement, with its evangelical counterpart, had, indeed, given back to religious feeling its rightful place and more, but had produced little or no theology, except for the particularly acrid and unprofitable Calvinist controversy.

The French revolution had set up a ferment of new ideas and induced a critical attitude towards all established notions and institutions. But the very extravagances of the movement, and the desperate nature of the war in which England was engaged against the propagandists of the revolution, made English people more than usually suspicious of new ideas, and gave a new lease of life to threatened institutions like the established church. Sympathy with the ideas of the revolution was regarded as dubiously patriotic and probably irreligious, as Priestley and William Frend found to their cost. When the former took flight to a more kindly clime, bishop Horsley could exult and sing, 'The orators and oracles of Birmingham and Essex Street are dumb.' Traditional teaching, therefore, remained in almost undisputed possession through the period of the great war, and beyond it, when the new fears of social unrest excited corresponding fears for Christian faith. For the first twenty years of the new century, English theology was at a standstill. The stars of the older day, Paley and Horsley and Watson, were setting, and no new stars had arisen. Theology could make no serious progress until it should emancipate itself from the outworn conventions of the previous century, and be free to face the urgent questions of the new age. The fashionable utilitarianism of Paley could kindle no warmth. Idealism already had its prophets in Germany; but it needed a Coleridge to discover and interpret them for English readers. There were also on the continent pioneers of a more scientific literary criticism; but their work was still unknown in this country. Herbert Marsh, fellow of St John's college, Cambridge, who had studied at Leipzig under Michaelis, published in four volumes (1793—1801) a translation of the latter's *Introduction to the New Testament*, together with essays and a dissertation of his own on the sources of the first three Gospels. He did not escape reproof for his rashness; but neither was he debarred from becoming a divinity professor and a bishop. The work had no immediate sequel. English scholarship was not ready for such questions; but, twenty-four years later, another future bishop, Connop Thirlwall, picked up the threads, in introducing to an English public Schleiermacher's *A Critical Essay on the Gospel of St Luke.* Still more necessary than critical learning was a freer view of biblical inspiration. Theological scholars worked in shackles, if not in blinkers, so long as *à priori* theories of the inerrancy of Scripture were unchallenged. When the critical methods that were already being applied to other literature should come to be applied to the Bible, a revolution would follow. If, in his Shakespearean studies, said Coleridge, he were to use the same uncritical liberties as divines allowed themselves in harmonising the inconsistencies of Scripture, 'I would almost undertake to harmonise Falstaff's account of the rogues in buckram into a coherent and consistent narrative.' The eighteenth century was seriously lacking in the historic sense; but, so soon as Wolf set himself to prove the plural authorship of the *Iliad*, and Niebuhr began discussing the origin of the early legends of Roman history, the day was not far distant when similar tests must be applied to biblical literature. The growth of the scientific temper in the new century, with its ruling idea of development, would also create a more sympathetic interest in doctrine viewed historically rather than as absolutely defined. The time was ripe for the advent of Christian scholars who, with a more daring spirit, would set their sails to catch the new breezes that were stirring.

But in what direction was a truer theology to be looked for? The spirit of religion burned brightest among the evangelical churchmen and methodists. The new century witnessed a new literary venture, *The Christian Observer*, which enlisted most of the evangelical talent—Henry Thornton, Thomas Scott the commentator and John Venn. The evangelicals were not wanting in ability or energy, but, as a body, had little taste for literature, except of a directly practical purpose. They showed their capacity for meeting the religious needs of their less critical followers in devotional and homiletic literature. Hannah More's *Cheap Repository Tracts* had an enormous vogue, and a simple moral tale by Legh Richmond, *The Dairyman's Daughter*, reached two million copies. For more cultivated readers, there was a great outpouring of pious biography. Charles Simeon, with all his wider interests, published almost nothing except homiletic literature, 'skeletons' of sermons, as he frankly called them. Even a professed work of learning like Joseph Milner's *History of the Church of Christ* (1794—7) aimed chiefly at edification; 'genuine piety is the only thing which I intend to celebrate.' Neither he nor his brother, dean Isaac Milner, who brought the history down to Luther's reformation, thought it necessary to read anything in Luther's language. Evangelical theology concentrated itself upon a few favourite doctrines which formed the scheme of salvation; its language was soon learnt, and it was all-sufficient. The peculiarity of this language, together with its hackneyed use, was enough to deter some minds, as the outspoken baptist minister, John Foster, complained in his essay *On the Aversion of Men of Taste to Evangelical Religion* (1805). Even biblical interpretation commanded but a narrow field of interest; the unfulfilled prophecies alone gave scope for speculation. The rigid theory of inspiration, in general, foreclosed enquiry, and the evangelicals retained that theory longest of all.

The true glory of the evangelicals lay in their pastoral zeal and in their philanthropy. The Clapham sect, as Sydney Smith nicknamed them, maintained a long struggle against the slave trade, and supported missionary societies and charitable enterprises with princely generosity. William Wilberforce, member of parliament for the county of York, raised a hitherto unpopular and misjudged party in the public esteem when, in 1797, he produced his *Practical View of Christianity*. It found more readers than any book by a clergyman; its effect is comparable with that of *The Serious Call.* It had, however, none of William Law's wit, though its writer was deemed by Madame de Staël the wittiest talker she had met in England. 'The present state of things in France, where a brood of moral vipers, as it were, is now hatching,' was the occasion for the serious self-examination proposed in it. 'We bear upon us but too plainly the marks of a declining empire.' The author sees no hope of averting this ruin, except by a revival of real Christianity, as contrasted with 'the decent selfishness' which passed muster with most Christians. 'The grand defect' in these nominal Christians is that they forget

> the peculiar doctrines of the Religion which they profess—the corruption of human nature—the atonement of the Saviour—and the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit.

But, apart from this sincere allegiance to the orthodox language, Wilberforce, as Sir James Stephen has shown, 'was very much a latitudinarian.' His catholic spirit had no taste for polemical divinity, and he gave himself, as he advised others to give themselves, to practical Christianity.

Among the evangelicals there was not enough of speculative interest to revive and liberate theology. Emancipation would not come from them. It came in part from an unexpected quarter, from the poet-philosopher and amateur theologian, Samuel Taylor Coleridge. From early days, he was in revolt against the utilitarian fashion in philosophy and in theology, and it became his aim, as Julius Hare said, to spiritualise both the one and the other. It was high time that philosophy should again have a hearing in English religion, as it had already had in Germany. English theology had been suffering, for at least a generation, from the poverty of its intellectual interest; it was Coleridge's province to stimulate that interest, as a long succession of religious thinkers have amply testified.

Coleridge would himself have recognised the truth and the pathos of Charles Lamb's description of him as 'an archangel a little damaged.' The contrast between his spiritual ideals and his sordid failures was as painful to him as it could be to his friends. He laboured under a deep conviction of sin which gave a personal intensity to his *Confessions,* as, for instance, when he says that, in the Bible, he has 'found words for my inmost thoughts, songs for my joy, utterances for my hidden griefs, and pleadings for my shame and my feebleness.' The theological reading of this 'library cormorant,' as he called himself, was discursive. He leapt contemptuously back over the *aevum rationalisticum* into the seventeenth century, where he found poets and divines to his mind. Archbishop Leighton, Jeremy Taylor and other writers of that age furnished him with matter for comment in his *Aids to Reflection* (1825). Some readers might feel themselves being led into 'a holy jungle' by Coleridge's musings on the persons of the Trinity as representing ipseity, altereity and communeity; but, at least, he gave them more to think about than did the orthodox defenders of the faith in their eminently lucid writings. It was time that someone called a halt to the prevailing mode in theological literature.

> *Evidences* of Christianity! I am weary of the word. Make a man feel the *want* of it; rouse him, if you can, to the self-knowledge of his *need* of it; and you may safely trust it to its own evidence.

Confessions of an Enquiring Spirit was published by his nephew, posthumously, in 1840. These seven letters on inspiration, simpler in style and thought than most of Coleridge's writings, are a remarkable anticipation of the attitude of modern Christians towards the Bible. Coleridge exhibits a happy union of complete freedom and of deep gratitude for the Scriptures. He combats the contemporary view that the Bible was not to be 'reasoned about in the way that other good books are.' He maintains that 'the Bible and Christianity are their own sufficient evidence.'

> In the Bible there is more that *finds* me than I have experienced in all other books put together;... the words of the Bible find me at greater depths of my being; and... whatever finds me brings with it an irresistible evidence of its having proceeded from the Holy Spirit.

He rests secure on his 'own dear experience' and, regardless of discrepancies and moral imperfections in the Scriptures, pursues his study 'with free and unboding spirit.'

If Coleridge's theological influence depended less on his books than on his conversation and friendship with religious thinkers, the same is hardly less true of another contemporary layman, Thomas Erskine of Linlathen. Erskine's natural gift lay rather in intimate spiritual converse and letters than in set writing. In mid-life he ceased to publish books, as if himself questioning his effectiveness as an author; but, for another thirty years, he talked and wrote to those who would find more readers than he ever could. Among his friends he counted Carlyle, Maurice, Stanley and McLeod Campbell, besides an interesting group of Christians on the continent, with whom, also, he corresponded, Vinet, Gaussen, Adolphe Monod and C. C. J. Bunsen. Erskine's writings, however, have considerable importance, in spite of their amateurishness and lack of method: 'your books,' wrote Maurice, in dedicating *Prophets and Kings* to him, 'seem to me to mark a crisis in the theological movement of this time.' While the orthodox Scottish divines of Erskine's younger days grimly propounded 'the sovereign decrees' of unbending Calvinism, there was room for his assertion in *The Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel* (1828) that 'Christ died, not for believers, but for the world.' Forgiveness, he declared, 'is a permanent condition of the heart of God'; 'God's arms are open.' Man must not claim even faith as the ground of his pardon; if he does so claim, it is only an instance of his unextinguished pride; 'He must have self to lean on, and so when he is obliged to surrender his own works, he betakes himself to his own faith as his prop. But this is still self.' The satiric humour, as well as the strong mystical vein in his writings, recalls William Law, who was one of Erskine's favourite authors. In the comparatively few writers whom his defective eyesight allowed him to study, he looked for 'light' rather than for theological learning: he preferred Plato and the neo-Platonists, Leighton and Law, to professional divines and their critical opponents. He dismisses a polemical writer with the judgment: 'he is a great reasoner: but I do not find any light in him at all. The thing itself he does not see, but he can give many powerful arguments for it.' Any reader will feel that Erskine saw 'the thing itself,' whether he could rightly explain it or not; the inner witness of the heart was to him a more compelling authority than Scripture or creed. Before he could accept doctrinal statements, his conscience must approve them as right and true. We may recognise Erskine's influence in McLeod Campbell's attempts to moralise the doctrine of atonement[1], and Maurice's insistence[2] on the ethical meaning of eternal life. But, if much of Erskine's characteristic teaching came into circulation through the writers whom he inspired, his *Letters* (1877) and occasional volumes will never lack readers who prefer to go to the fountain-head, to draw their own immediate inspiration from one for whom religion was not 'a mere set of notions' but 'God within us.'

Meanwhile, new life began to stir in the universities. At Oxford, Oriel college was reaping the advantages of its reforming zeal. Ruled in succession by two energetic provosts, Eveleigh and Copleston, who encouraged their pupils to reason freely, the college became noted during Copleston's provostship (1814—28) for the

[1] *The Nature of the Atonement*, 1856.

[2] *Theological Essays*, 1853.

unfettered criticism indulged in by its fellows. Oxford nicknamed them the noetics or intellectuals, and had some reason to fear and dislike the Oriel common-room. A society accustomed to defer to authority and the voice of tradition was a little shocked by the freedom with which the Oriel men submitted anything and everything to criticism. They favoured reform alike in academic and in ecclesiastical politics. They had no agreed programme, and formed no party; yet their friendship and common aims were likely to make them a considerable influence in the church, when they should be called to the high office to which their gifts entitled them. To form a party was never their wish; indeed, it would have defeated their chief object, which was the creation of a habit of intellectual independence. Richard Whately, the ablest and the most typical of the group, consistently repudiated any such ambition; in 1843, he wrote to Lady Osborne,

> Is it getting up a faction for me you are after? No, I'll have no Whatelyites.... Anyone who tries to imitate me, is sure to be unlike me in the important circumstance of being an imitator; and no one can think as I do who does not think for himself.

He showed a touch of his quality in his first literary venture, published anonymously in 1819, *Historic Doubts relative to Napoleon Buonaparte*, a *reductio ad absurdum* of the method of Hume's *Essay on Miracles*. Whately, on his solitary walks, 'chopping logic by himself,' or in company disallowing any inexact use of terms (even on his death-bed he took his chaplain to task for misquoting St Paul), is a rather formidable figure, a little disdainful of lesser minds. But, if his reasoning powers were alarming, he, too, had his limitations: 'he was the least equipped with books,' said J. S. Mill of him, 'among any of the great thinkers of his times.' There was no room for poetry or mysticism, and little room for awe in his somewhat arid mind; and he grievously failed to do justice to 'the tractites.'

Yet Whately's anonymous *Letters on the Church, By an Episcopalian* (1826) had given his pupil, Newman, the latter's first conception of the church as a spiritual society independent of the state. Whately's ruling commonsense made him equally dislike the extremes of what he called 'the doubting school,' and he lived long enough to denounce *Essays and Reviews* in the House of Lords. But, in his Oxford days, and even after he became archbishop of Dublin in 1831, he brought into English theology a wholesome breath of commonsense. Many cobwebs of speculative divinity were blown away, when he insisted that the Bible 'has no technical vocabulary,' and that it is more important to get the drift of a whole passage than to build upon isolated texts.

A similar service was rendered by Whately's Oriel contemporary, Renn Dickson Hampden, when, in his Bampton lectures (1832), he contrasted the simplicity of the New Testament language with the elaborate superstructure of 'logical theology' There was a saying of John Foster, a writer whom Hampden sometimes quotes, 'I deem it the wisest rule to use precisely the language of Scripture'; similarly, Hampden preferred Scripture to scholastic definition. The language of theology should be regarded as symbolical: therefore, to deduce further from its terms 'is like making every circumstance in an emblem or metaphor the ground of scientific deduction.' Moreover, the advocate's desire to defend these scholastic propositions makes the interpretation of Scripture over-solicitous and predetermined, rather than open and natural. The interpreter is intent on a process rather than 'a mere follower of Revelation'; the 'fact' will be accommodated to the theory. We must note, however, as still characteristic even of liberal divines at this time that, while Hampden will rigorously criticise any inferences from Scripture, he asserts without qualification that 'whatever is recorded in those books is indisputably true.' The book has its inconsistencies and its limitations; but it shows its author, under the influence of the new scientific spirit, to be before his time in his interest in the evolution of doctrine. His depreciation of church traditions and formulas, and, still more, his advocacy, in 1834, of the admission of dissenters to the universities ('tests are no part of religious education'), drew upon him the open hostility of the tractarians, who were now strong enough to try conclusions with the liberal 'apostasy.' Hampden, the unwilling protagonist in this scene, cut no very happy figure in extricating himself from charges of heterodoxy. He had himself to thank for some misunderstandings; but his enemies showed little scruple in making all the mischief they could, both in 1836, when he was appointed regius professor of divinity at Oxford, and, again, eleven years later, when he was nominated to the bishopric of Hereford. The judgment of principal Tulloch on Hampden deserves to be weighed in the scales against the steady depreciation of his 'confused thinking' by the tractarians: 'There are seeds of thought in Dr Hampden's writings far more fertile and enduring than any to be found in the writings of his chief opponents.'

The early Oriel liberals are, as a whole, disappointing. There was in them more of dry light than of divine fire. But, if the charge of coldness fairly lies against some of them, it has no meaning in the case of the most attractive and most influential of their number, Thomas Arnold. If 'tendencies to Socinianism' could be detected in Hampden or Whately, Arnold might defy his worst enemy to find them in his writings. Only Newman, in a moment of scepticism, could question Arnold's right to be called a Christian. His fervid devotion to Christ radiates through all his sermons and letters, and gives them a glow of life, long after the writings of his liberal contemporaries have ceased to live. Of Arnold, at least, it could not be said that he hoped to 'heal the hurt of his people lightly' with useful knowledge and facile optimism. Though he valued knowledge, and was possessed of 'even cheerfulness,' he could speak naturally and effectively the deeper language of the soul. If he was not himself a great thinker or critic, he excelled as a teacher and preacher in cultivating the habit of moral thoughtfulness. His sermons reflect at once his robust good sense and his contagious earnestness; they are, above all, alive and breathe the mountain air: 'I will not give my boys,' he said, 'to drink out of stagnant waters.' To older audiences and to his readers he offered stronger meat, but still avoided the technical language of theology and the jargon of the pulpit: 'into that common language, in which we think and feel, all truth must be translated, if we would think and feel respecting it at once rightly, clearly, and vividly.' He had learnt something of the scientific method of history from Niebuhr, and was not afraid of its application to Biblical study. On the historical and moral difficulties of the Bible, he had much to say in his sermons, and, though a modern reader would find his treatment of such difficulties only mildly critical, yet it reveals a sense of proportion, which augured well for the future of such studies.

> If my faith in God and my hope of eternal life is to depend on the accuracy of a date or of some minute historical particular, who can wonder that I should listen to any sophistry that may be used in defence of them, or that I should force my mind to do any sort of violence to itself, when life and death seem to hang on the issue of its decision?

Arnold's desire for unity amounted to a passion, which overrode even necessary distinctions: he was for fusing church and state, clergy and laity, secular and religious, the human and the divine. In his hands, this treatment was safe enough, because the higher term prevailed in such union; but, for less noble natures, it spelt confusion. His hatred of all division and party spirit made him tolerant in principle, but a bitter opponent of what he believed to be intolerance. When his friend Hampden was attacked in 1836, he struck out at 'the Oxford malignants' in *The Edinburgh Review* with an invective which disturbed even his supporters. But, already, before his premature death, on 12 June 1842, the eve of his forty-eighth birthday, he had adopted a broader and more tranquil outlook, especially after the kindly reception which he obtained from former opponents at Oxford on his becoming, in 1841, regius professor of modern history.

Arnold's most celebrated Rugby pupil, Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, has described a scene from his boyhood in 1834 which brings together representatives of most of the types of liberal theology mentioned in this chapter. As he sat in the library of Hurstmonceaux rectory, where he noticed the preponderance of German books, Julius Hare's curate, John Sterling, came in with the current number of *The Quarterly Review*, noticing Coleridge's death and containing an article on his poetry. On the same occasion, the friends discussed the unpublished manuscript of *Confessions of an Enquiring Spirit*, and agreed to submit it to Arnold for his advice as to its publication. Julius Hare, contemporary and friend of Connop Thirlwall at Charterhouse and Trinity college, Cambridge, who, ten years later, became the brother-in-law of his pupil, Frederick Denison Maurice, was a link between many generations. His chief work, *The Mission of the Comforter* (1846), he dedicated 'to the honoured memory of Samuel Taylor Coleridge,' and he repeatedly mentioned his profound obligation to the Cambridge philosopher, whom many of the Oxford lights, like Whately, disparaged as a misty thinker. As Maurice remarks,

> Hare cannot be suspected, as many have been, of resorting to Coleridge because, at his restaurant, German cookery was adapted to weak English stomachs, not yet prepared to receive it in its genuine form; for Hare knew the taste of German dishes and had partaken of them fearlessly.

Hare and Thirlwall were as well acquainted as any Englishmen of their day with German literature, yet they retained a thoroughly English outlook. Thirlwall translated Schleiermacher's *St Luke* (1825) and collaborated with Hare in the translation of Niebuhr's *History of Rome* (1828—32). They both recognised the necessity of applying the newer historical method to the study of the Scriptures, and were upheld in that view by a belief in the progressive unfolding of religious truth. If Christians accepted the dispensation of the Spirit, said Thirlwall, they must believe that 'His later lessons may well transcend His earlier.' He did not expect his English readers to accept all the conclusions of Schleiermacher, but

> to diffuse the spirit of impartial criticism more extensively among ourselves in the study of the sacred writings, when it has hitherto been either wholly wanting or confined to very subordinate points, was also the translator's principal object.

'I do not believe,' wrote Hare, 'that there is any other living man who has done anything at all approaching to what Maurice has effected in reconciling the reason and the conscience of the thoughtful men of our age to the faith of our church.' Maurice was a religious teacher more than a critic: indeed, for biblical criticism, he had no great liking or aptitude. Rather, he was in the true succession to Coleridge and Erskine: the latter's *Brazen Serpent* (1831) had helped him, as it helped McLeod Campbell, to find his gospel. The son of a unitarian minister, member of a family sharply divided in its religious allegiance, Maurice believed himself called 'from my cradle' to the pursuit of unity. He was persuaded, like J. S. Mill, that thinking people were, for the most part, right in what they affirmed, wrong in what they denied. He believed that each church party asserted some great truth, and in *The Religions of the World* (1847), an early example of the comparative study of religions in this country, he showed the same anxiety to appreciate all positive excellence. But his breadth of sympathy was not indifference or vagueness. He had nothing in common with the 'hang theology' air of some broad churchmen, or with the contemporary shyness of dogmatic statement. 'Theology,' he declared, 'is what our age is crying out for, even when it thinks that it is crying to be rid of theology.' He saw the necessity of clearing current theology of what he took to be erroneous and even immoral teaching. He was deeply concerned so to state the doctrine of atonement as not to offend the moral sense, and he resented, as warmly as Mill, Mansel's suggestion that the justice of God 'is not the kind of justice which would be expected of men.' The starting point of all his theology was the love of God, not the sinfulness of man. This was his best inheritance from his unitarian upbringing; he remained surer of the infinite love of God than of any other doctrine, and he examined all current religious belief in the light of this ruling idea. Here, he believed, was a gospel for all mankind; any limitation of it he attacked with an almost savage intensity. He gibbeted his opponents as giving, in effect, Christ's good news in these reduced terms:

> Your Father has created multitudes whom He means to perish for ever and ever. By my agony and bloody sweat, by my cross and passion, I have induced Him in the case of an inconceivably small minority to forego that design.

A divine who could write and speak in this strain showed more courage than discretion; he was bound to be misunderstood and mistrusted. He knew himself what to expect; 'when I wrote the sentence about eternal death, I was writing my own sentence at King's College.'

It may be felt that Maurice forced upon the New Testament language an interpretation of eternal punishment to square with his belief in the 'infinite' love of God, rather than that he came to his decision from an unimpassioned study of the text. But he was a prophet of great ideas, which consumed and fired him, not an exact student of philology and history. He had, also, that mystical quality of mind which was lacking in the Oxford liberals. He sought to read the eternal in the manifestations of it in time: 'we must have the eternal, which our fathers nearly forgot.'

With the same disregard of popularity and the same risk of misunderstanding, Maurice proclaimed himself a Christian socialist; 'I seriously believe,' he wrote, 'that Christianity is the only foundation of Socialism, and that a true Socialism is the necessary result of a sound Christianity.' But, though both Christians and socialists hastened to disown him, the direction which he gave to Christian thinking has been extensively followed, so that much of what he taught, whether of a more universal theology or of a truer Christian brotherhood, has become the commonplace of the pulpit. As his friend Kingsley had hoped, Christians came to accept the teaching of *Theological Essays* (1853) 'not as a code complete, but as a hint towards a new method of thought.' Maurice was more capable of giving hints than precise directions, and even the hints were sometimes unnecessarily indistinct. But he was not wilfully obscure; if he was less lucid than the Oriel liberals, it was partly because he was struggling to plumb greater depths of religious experience.

It is characteristic of the changing times to find Maurice associated with Kingsley and Robertson, in 1851, in giving a course of sermons in a London church on the message of the church to rich and poor. Robertson's turn came first; Kingsley was inhibited by the bishop of London after delivering the second; and the third was consequently never delivered. If Maurice was outspoken, and Robertson impetuous, 'Parson Lot' was vehement; 'when once fairly let loose upon the prey,' wrote W. R. Greg of him, 'all the Red Indian within him comes to the surface, and he wields the tomahawk with an unbaptized heartiness.' Though Kingsley made no original contribution to theological thinking, he was a successful populariser of Maurice's teaching, and applied it to the social questions of the day with remarkable directness. Nor was he a mere echo of Maurice; his romantic love of nature and of all things that have breath and his fine humanity were great gifts for a preacher.

Frederick Robertson's reputation was won in the face of obstacles. He entered the Anglican ministry without any academic fame, and, for some years, had neither success nor happiness, owing to uncongenial surroundings and his own extreme sensitiveness. For barely six years, he ministered in a small proprietary chapel in Brighton. When death took him thence, in 1853, at the age of thirty-seven, he had published only a few casual sermons, and yet, already, he was known as a unique preacher. Five volumes of his sermons were posthumously printed. Their form is unfinished; some of them are only his extensive notes, others are the products of amateur reporting. Yet no sermons of that period, not even Newman's, have found so wide a range of readers. They are like no other sermons; they owe almost nothing recognisable to works of theological learning; they do not reflect the theology of any master-mind or of any party. Robertson preserves his independence till it becomes to him an almost painful isolation. He thinks his own way through the difficulties, and, though his exegesis may be unwarranted, it is never uninteresting. He avoids the technical terms of the schools, and yet his sermons are full of doctrinal teaching, conveyed by suggestion rather than by dogmatic exposition. A typical example of his habit of mind is afforded by his sermon 'On the Glory of the Virgin Mother.' He is not content to point out the dangers of the cult of the Virgin; its very prevalence establishes for him the probability that it 'has a root in truth.'

> We assume it as a principle that no error has ever spread widely, that was not the exaggeration or perversion of a truth. And be assured that the first step towards dislodging error is to understand the truth at which it aims. It matters little whether fierce Romanism or fierce Protestantism wins the day: but it does matter whether or not in a conflict we lose some precious Christian truth, as well as the very spirit of Christianity.

An enquiry begun in this spirit could not fail to be constructive rather than destructive. A generation that felt its doubts acutely was fortunate to have such men as Maurice and Robertson for its preachers. While they criticised what they believed to be faulty or obsolete modes of theological expression, their main concern was to lose nothing which had spiritual value.

Their influence was more enduring than that of the Oxford liberals, whose early promise had hardly justified itself. In spite of their intellectual ability and vigorous self-assertion, the Oriel men stirred little general enthusiasm, and were soon attracting less attention in Oxford itself than the second movement which emanated from the Oriel common-room. The tractarians were in full reaction against the liberals; in Newman's eyes 'the great apostasy is Liberalism in religion.' There was, for a while, a serious set-back and discouragement of free enquiry. Moreover, the liberal theologians of the next generation spoke with less confidence than the Whatelys and Arnolds. The difficulties of faith were increasing under the pressure of many convergent lines of modern enquiry, and the concessions asked for were heavier and nearer the heart of Christian teaching. Strauss's *Life of Jesus* (1835), which George Eliot translated in 1846, opened anew for English readers the whole question of the supernatural. The problems suggested by physical science were hardly less urgent. Scientific knowledge had been rapidly advancing all through the century, though its bearing on the traditional theology was not at first perceived. But queen Victoria's reign had not proceeded far before there was a more general appreciation of the difficulties of reconciling new and old ways of thinking. The spirit of doubt, even if it were reluctant and ill at ease, obtruded itself in poet and essayist and historian, as well as in philosopher and theologian. Many who had started in the following of Newman, like Mark Pattison and James Anthony Froude, instead of following him to Rome, had recovered from their enthusiasm only to become coldly distrustful of any authority.

But, while there were many who lost their faith and drifted into a relation of indifference or positive antagonism to Christianity, there was also a fresh and vigorous attempt on the part of those who sought to combine free thinking with a position inside the Christian church. If the first wave of Oxford liberal thought had long spent itself, it was followed at some interval by a larger wave, which made more stir. The new movement bore a new name. The label 'broad church' is said by Jowett to have been proposed in his hearing by A. H. Clough, and it came into familiar use in Oxford some years before it received any literary expression[1]. In *The Edinburgh Review*, in 1853, W. J. Conybeare spoke of a third party in the church, 'which is called Moderate or Catholic or Broad Church by its friends, Latitudinarian or Indifferent by its enemies.' He described its distinctive character as the desire for comprehension, and its watchwords as charity and toleration. An organised party they never designed to become: individual independence was their most treasured right. There were many, like Maurice, who unquestionably helped to liberalise theological thought, and yet hated the very notion of party. But there was a fairly coherent band of liberal clergymen, linked by academic friendship or for self-defence, who stood together, both consciously and in the public mind. They advocated a bolder application of critical methods to the Bible than their predecessors would have allowed, and yet their love for the Bible was often conspicuous. As preachers or commentators, many of them exhibited notable gifts for interpretation. The concerted appearance on the same day in 1855 of Jowett's commentary on certain epistles of St Paul and of Stanley's commentary on the epistles to the Corinthians, indicated the freer spirit which was beginning to animate English study of the New Testament. The freshness of Jowett's treatment, especially in the dissertations, is still unexhausted. The Pauline terms, which had become hard and unlovely in the hands of schoolmen and reformation doctors, are again alive, as Jowett submits them to the scrutiny of modern psychology. There is, also, an unforgettable picture of the apostle himself, not more remarkable for its delicate intuition than for its emotional quality.

> A poor aged man, worn by some bodily or mental disorder, who had been often scourged, and bore on his face the traces of indignity and sorrow in every form—such an one, led out of prison between Roman soldiers, probably at times faltering in his utterance, the creature, as he seemed to spectators, of nervous sensibility; yearning, almost with a sort of fondness, to save the souls of those whom he saw around him—spoke a few eloquent words in the cause of Christian truth, at which kings were awed, telling the tale of his own conversion with such simple pathos, that after-ages have hardly heard the like.

The ungenerous treatment which Jowett received from his theological opponents at Oxford was enough to discourage him from further theological studies, and, in succeeding years, Plato received from him more attention than St Paul. But he continued to find expression for his thoughts on religion in regular preaching.

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[1] See *New English Dictionary*, *s.v.* 'Broad.'

In his posthumous volumes of sermons, he shows more care for simple truths and simple duties than for the controversies of the hour; he encourages a sane and well-balanced outlook on life—'that is a maimed soul which loves goodness and has no love of truth, or which loves truth and has no love of goodness'—and he expresses himself as thankful for his church-membership

> in this ancient house of our fathers, with all its faults the best and most tolerant of the Churches of Christendom, and the least opposed to the spirit of the age.

Stanley's commentary was full of human interest, but defective, like the rest of his writings, in critical power. He had many gifts and much miscellaneous knowledge, but never gave himself wholly to any one branch of exact learning. 'What does this remind you of?' was Arnold's favourite question in school, and Stanley was busy answering it the rest of his life. His *Lectures on the Jewish Church* (1863—76), and most of his many books, abound in historical parallels and similitudes, sometimes felicitous, at other times forced. He had 'a grand curiosity' for the historical and literary associations of place. He would sooner describe an heresiarch's country and customs than unravel his exploded opinions. When he was installed dean of Westminster, he hailed as a happy omen the ancient admonition that he was set there 'for the enlargement of the Christian Church.' He proved faithful to his conception of his office in giving the abbey pulpit a more national character; the preachers whom he brought there represented English religious thought of many types. His published sermons reflect his own urbane, cultured and tolerant spirit, his feeling for history and his dramatic sense, but they made no contribution to the theology of the next generation.

The publication of *Essays and Reviews* in 1860 made the broad churchmen a storm-centre as much as *Tract XC* had done for the high churchmen. It was not intended, but was generally taken to be, the manifesto of a party. The volume was, in fact, the concluding number of a series of Oxford and Cambridge essays, issued annually. The editor, Henry Bristow Wilson, was a country clergyman whose Bampton lectures entitled *The Communion of Saints* (1851) had already caused him to become suspect. The seven writers consisted of six clergymen, and one layman, Charles Wycliffe Goodwin, an Egyptologist who had resigned his Cambridge fellowship on finding himself unable to take holy orders. They were soon, by an outraged religious public, dubbed *Septem contra Christum*. Replies, in the shape of books and pamphlets and articles, continued for many months to be issued. Two of the essayists, Rowland Williams and the editor, were tried and condemned for heresy in the court of arches; their acquittal, on appeal to the judicial committee of the privy council, afforded a valuable protection to liberty of thought within the church of England. But it is not hard to account for the opposition to the essayists. Though many of the essays were blameless and unaggressive, the general effect was negative, and some of the essays were provocative. Maurice complained of the absence of theology in the volume, and especially of the neglect of 'the full revelation of God in Christ' which he believed to be all that was worth preaching. Stanley, who must have symbolised closely with some of the contributors, found fault with its negative character: 'no book which treats of religious questions can hope to make its way to the heart of the English nation unless it gives, at the same time that it takes away.' The editor gave just offence in his essay, 'The National Church' by betraying a greater anxiety to see the church national than Christian. Baden Powell, Savilian professor of geometry at Oxford from 1827, was a survivor from the early Oriel school, and died directly after the issue of *Essays and Reviews.* He had already written much on the relations of theology and science, and in his essay he pressed the uniformity of nature against the argument for miracle. But for his opportune death, he could hardly have escaped prosecution. His generation would never have tolerated his attempt to free Christian theism from a dependence on miracles. Mark Pattison's essay, 'The Tendencies of Religious Thought, 1688—1750,' was, for the most part, a purely historical survey, and would have avoided criticism if it had not appeared in the incriminating volume. Jowett urged, 'Interpret the Scripture like any other book,' and yet maintained that it would remain unlike any other book.

> Scripture has an inner life or soul; it has also an outward body or form. That form is language, which imperfectly expresses our common notions, much more those higher truths which religion teaches.

His essay, like Frederick Temple's, 'The Education of the World,' was pious and conciliatory, though both included (what, indeed, gives unity to the whole collection of essays) a strong plea for free criticism. 'He is guilty of high treason against the faith,' wrote Temple, 'who fears the result of any investigation, whether philosophical, or scientific, or historical.' Yet, the future archbishop may have had some qualms when he read Rowland Williams's essay on Bunsen's *Biblical Researches.* The shock was not mediated by the English writer, but rendered liable to cause the maximum of offence. Williams's *Psalms and Litanies*, published by his widow in 1872, proves him to have had a true devotional feeling, and a desire to enter into communion with the Eternal Spirit, but it also shows how he consistently reduced ancient collects to a unitarian standard. Maurice had, indeed, touched the chief defect of *Essays and Reviews*, a defect which the lapse of time has made even more apparent. The disparagement of doctrine, and, especially, the neglect to contribute anything to the understanding of the person and nature of Jesus Christ, render it of little service to a later age, which, like other ages before it, sees that here is the core of essentially Christian thinking. The true claim of the essayists to grateful remembrance is that they asserted with one voice the duty of the Christian church to welcome new truth, and the right of her accredited sons to make it known. Not in vain is one of the essayists commemorated on the walls of his college chapel as a scholar *qui libertatem cleri anglicani feliciter vindicavit.*

Public opinion was so far in favour of wider theological liberty that the acquittal of the essayists in 1864 was followed next year by the Clerical Subscription act, substituting a general assent to the XXXIX Articles of religion for the *ex animo* subscription 'to all things therein contained,' which had been required for two centuries. There were similar struggles for freedom in other churches. Scottish theology, which had been eminently conservative, became less provincial as it grew bolder and more critical. In the Free church of Scotland, the biblical contributions of William Robertson Smith to the ninth edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* excited a growing hostility from 1875 till 1881, when he was removed from his professorial chair at Aberdeen. But there was a larger public ready to form its judgment when he published his popular lectures, *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church* (1881) and *The Prophets of Israel* (1882). Freed from ecclesiastical ties, he pursued at Cambridge, till his death in 1894, his original researches into the primitive religions of the Semitic peoples.

Prosecutions for heresy and indictments of heterodox publications brought theological questions into general discussion throughout the 'sixties. The magazines, and especially the new *Fortnightly Review*, often provided the arena. The excitement over *Essays and Reviews* was not allayed before a new quarry was started by bishop Colenso's free handling of the Pentateuch, which found few whole-hearted defenders in the Christian camp, partly owing to the author's provocative and unfortunate manner. It was more difficult for the contemporary orthodox mind to decide whether the anonymous author of *Ecce Homo* (1865) was friend or foe. Like Matthew Arnold's essays and many other books of the period, *Ecce Homo* represents the attempt to save religion in the shipwreck of orthodoxy, and, above all, to save Christian ethics. Its author, who was soon discovered to be John Robert Seeley, at that time professor of Latin in University college, London, intentionally avoided controversial theology. When he was reproached for 'concealing' his theological opinions, he replied that he concealed them 'only in the sense in which the vast majority of the community have concealed them; that is, he has not published them.' Seeley took for granted, as orthodox and heterodox writers commonly did in his generation, that 'almost all men' could agree upon the Christian ethical standard. With an engaging fervour and literary grace, he set before his readers Christ's 'enthusiasm for humanity,' and found in it a motive which could still be for Christians a stronger passion than any other.

> Christ raised the feeling of humanity from being a feeble restraining power to be an inspiring passion. The Christian moral reformation may indeed be summed up in this—humanity changed from a restraint to a motive.

Seeley regarded Christianity as natural fellow-feeling or humanity raised to the point of enthusiasm. He did not think that the world could 'do without Christ and his Church.' Indeed, he reckoned the person of Christ to be of more account than anything which he said or did: 'Christ's discovery is himself.' The moral teaching of the New Testament, for instance, the law of forgiveness, 'Christ's most striking innovation in morality,' was commended by Seeley to his generation with greater freshness and charm than by any other writer. No one could miss his meaning or ever forget his fine tribute to the distinctive note of Christian morality.

There was much to discourage the Christian advocate in the 'seventies. Neither science nor culture was inclined to be docile. Huxley made merry in the monthly reviews, and Matthew Arnold subjected the defenders of traditional theology to successive volleys of Gallic raillery. Confidence was restored to the orthodox ranks, less by the concessions of broad churchmen or the defence of orthodox apologists, than by the rise of a school of historical criticism. If the appeal was to be to scholarship, even the general reader would soon see that sound learning and candour were not all on one side. A notable part in the creation of an improved theological scholarship was played by three Cambridge contemporaries and friends, Brooke Foss Westcott, Fenton John Anthony Hort, and Joseph Barber Lightfoot. The tractarian scholars had been chiefly interested in the age of the councils; the Cambridge scholars devoted themselves to the study of Christian origins. Westcott and Hort's main work was the recension of the Greek text of the New Testament; Lightfoot was concerned with the Pauline epistles and the apostolic Fathers. Their work was timely and valuable, but they would have been the last to regard it as final. They shared the characteristic belief of the liberal theologians in the progressive apprehension of Christian truth. 'Let us all thank God,' said bishop Westcott to his clergy, at the close of his long life of teaching, 'that He has called us to unfold a growing message, and not to rehearse a stereotyped tradition.' 'Christianity,' wrote Hort, 'is not an uniform and monotonous tradition, but to be learned only by successive steps of life.' Hort's passion for meticulous accuracy and his extreme caution caused him to publish little, and his shyness stood in the way of his influence as an oral teacher. Yet his posthumous Hulsean lectures, *The Way the Truth the Life,* revealed him as a master of pregnant phrase. Centuries of speculation on the doctrine of atonement are arraigned by the terse judgment: 'Theologies which have sundered God's righteousness from His love have done equal wrong to both.'

While Christian scholarship was thus holding its own, there was also a welcome escape from the determinist and utilitarian fashions in philosophy. At Oxford, Thomas Hill Green, tutor of Balliol exercised a strong spiritual influence over those whom criticism was compelling to discard 'the fair humanities of old religion.' James Martineau, of an older generation than Green, did not publish any of his more important books till his eightieth year. In earlier life, Martineau had adopted the determinist and utilitarian theories of morals, but he proved their effective critic in his octogenarian volume, *Types of Ethical Theory* (1885). Three years later, he vindicated theistic belief in *A Study of Religion.*

The critical principles for which liberal theologians had had to do battle were by this time no longer the badges of their tribe, but were accepted by most educated Christians. For instance, high churchmen had travelled more than half way from the tractarian to the liberal position, when, in 1889, a group of Oxford friends combined, in *Lux Mundi*, to make a re-statement of Christian faith; 'it needs disencumbering, re-interpreting, explaining.' 'It is the test of the Church's legitimate tenure that she can encourage free inquiry into her title-deeds.'

Cross-currents of theological opinion have become in recent years increasingly noticeable. If high churchmen have adopted a freer biblical criticism, broad churchmen and free churchmen have ceased to belittle the idea of the church. Theology becomes more and more cosmopolitan, and oversteps denominational boundaries. Even that church which rates highest the principle of authority has had its disciplinary difficulties with those sons who seek to create a catholic atmosphere in which the modern mind may breathe more freely. The modernist movement is yet too near and unexhausted to find historical treatment, were it not that its most brilliant English representative, George Tyrrell, has already written his last word. The title of one of his earlier books, *Nova et Vetera*, is a fit symbol of his lifelong attempt to adjust new and old. His mind was delicately sensitive to every modern pressure, yet he loved the past and would lose none of its heritage: 'The new must be made out of the old, must retain and transcend all its values.' The very word catholic, said the Abbé Brémond at his graveside, was music to his ears; he was more securely catholic than Christian. Now he would be wondering whether the Christianity of the future would consist 'of mysticism and charity, and possibly the Eucharist in its primitive form as the outward bond'; now he would look longingly back to the church of his baptism; and yet again give a last loyalty to the church of his adoption. He was still probing this way and that for sure foothold when death interrupted his pilgrimage. 'Had I been Moses I don't think I should have felt not entering the Land of Promise one bit, so long as I knew that Israel would do so one day.'

It is inevitable that Tyrrell's career should be compared with Newman's; he made the comparison himself in one of the latest of his essays.

> 'Be my soul with the Saints!' says Newman, looking away from Anglicanism towards the altars of Rome. But is there not a wider Communion of Saints, whereof the canonised are but a fraction, and whose claims are founded, not in miracles or prodigies, but in that sincerity to truth and righteousness, without which even orthodoxy were nothing worth? Be my soul with such saints, whatever their creed and communion!

CHAPTER XIV

HISTORIANS

WRITERS ON ANCIENT AND EARLY ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY

WITH the eighteenth century, or, more precisely, in its concluding decade, the last two of its three great British historians had passed away; and it was as if, beneath the shadow of the imposing names of Hume, Robertson and Gibbon, no growth of rival dignity and splendour could venture to rear its head. During the ensuing years of long-sustained national effort, few minds cared to concentrate themselves upon a close study of past public life. Yet, when this period came to an end with the Napoleonic, that had grown out of the revolutionary, wars, it was not, in the first instance, a patriotic impulse which turned attention back to historical studies. Nor, although in our literature the efforts of the romantic school were then at their height, and although, both here and in other countries, the influence of Scott, more powerfully than that of any other poet or prose writer, changed alike the spirit and the form of historical composition, were the revival of the study of history and the re-assertion of the claim of historians to a place of honour among English writers due, primarily at all events, to an intellectual reaction. The motive force which, first and foremost, inspired the new progress of English historical literature in the nineteenth century is to be sought in what has been aptly called the second revival of classical learning in Europe, but what may be more exactly described as the beginnings of later critical scholarship. In the field of history, the search for materials and the examination of them now first became an integral part of the historian's task, without pretending to supersede composition, or, in other words, the literary or artistic side of his labours. F. A. Wolf had led the way on which, in Greek historical studies, Otfried Müller and Boeckh[1] followed; but it was Niebuhr who placed historical writing on an entirely new basis; and it was his immortal *History of Rome* which first conveyed to his English contemporaries a clear perception of the uses of the critical method in the treatment of history. We shall, therefore, not go far wrong in starting in our present summary from near the point at which we closed that of English historical literature in the eighteenth century[2], speaking, in the first instance, of English contributions to ancient history in the nineteenth.

Niebuhr's title to hold a high and enduring place among historians rests, above all, on his having been the first to apply, on a grand scale and to an important subject (the growth of the national life of a great popular community), the critical method which had become indispensable to the discovery of historical truth. Of this method he made use in his masterpiece, the *Roman History*, which was something very different from a mere assault on the traditional view of his subject; nor was he, by any means, the first to impugn the authority of the accepted narrative[3]. On the other hand, his explanation of that account as mainly due to the influence of a popular ballad-literature cannot be said to have ultimately established itself as sufficient. The permanent strength of Niebuhr's great work lay elsewhere—in the force of his imagination and in his steadfast adherence to the belief in the moral principles which underlie legal institutions freely adopted by freemen, as determining the continuance and prosperity of a political community.

So much it seemed necessary to premise, in order to account for the impression made by Niebuhr upon Englishmen who, in the first and second quarters of the nineteenth century, were shaking off the isolation which, in the preceding period of the great wars, had kept English learning and letters more or less apart from continental, and who were eager to breathe the free air of research and enquiry. One of these was Julius Hare, perhaps best known to posterity by *Guesses at Truth* (1827), written by him in conjunction with his brother Augustus. Julius Hare was an early lover of German literature, with which he had first become familiar at Weimar in the classical days of 1804—5. In 1828—32, he united with his schoolfellow and brother fellow of Trinity, Connop Thirlwall, in publishing a translation of Niebuhr's *Roman History*. Their first volume was vehemently denounced in *The Quarterly Review*[1] as the product of scepticism; so that, in 1829, Julius Hare put forth a *Vindication of Niebuhr's History* from these charges. Another follower of Niebuhr was Thomas Arnold, headmaster of Rugby from 1827, to whom Niebuhr himself ascribed the first introduction of his *Roman History* to the British public[2]. Arnold, on first becoming acquainted, in his studious days at Laleham, with Niebuhr's work, had been reluctant to accept all his conclusions, but had gradually grown unwilling to dissociate himself from any of them. In 1827, he paid a memorable visit to the master at Bonn, where he formed a lasting friendship with Bunsen, Niebuhr's successor at Rome and the zealous transmitter of many of his historical ideas. Arnold had by this time resolved upon testifying, after an enduring fashion, to his almost unbounded admiration for a historian with whose genius his own had certain affinities—notably, the union of deep religious conviction with a sturdy liberalism, due, in Niebuhr's case, to the influence of descent, while, in Arnold's, it was nowhere stronger than in his view of priestcraft as the fellow antichrist to utilitarian unbelief.

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[1] Wolf's *Prolegomena ad Homerum* appeared, in Latin, in 1795. Boeckh's *Public Economy of Athens* was translated into English in 1828 by (Sir) G. Cornewall Lewis, and K. O. Müller's *Dorians* by the same and H. Tufnell in 1830.

[2] See *ante*, vol. x, p. 320.

[3] In a review, for instance, of Tytler's *Roman History* published in *The Literary Journal* in 1803 by James Mill, a strong protest is made against accepting as true the record of the Roman kings, or, generally, of the transactions supposed to have taken place before the fall of Carthage: which is precisely the position of Sir G. C. Lewis.

Arnold's interest in historical work had always been great, and, while, like Niebuhr's, it was closely associated with philological studies, it particularly directed itself to geographical and topographical research, in their bearing upon history. He had begun historical composition with a short history of Greece, which never saw the light[3], and with a series of articles on Roman history from the second Punic war onwards to the age of Trajan[1] —a period which Niebuhr, had he ever reached it in his *History*, would have treated as one of decay. (Arnold's edition of Thucydides, where the topographical element is not wanting, is mentioned in a subsequent chapter.) But it was in his *History of Rome* that, inspired by Niebuhr's, he first essayed a historical narrative on a large scale. The book appeared in three volumes, reaching to the end of the second Punic war (1838—43); the *History of the later Roman Commonwealth* followed posthumously, in 1845. It is, of course, above all in the earlier parts of the work that the *spiritus* of his great exemplar dominates the scene.

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[1] In a review of Granville's *Travels in Russia*, vol. xxxix, no. 77 (1829).

[2] This was in an earlier article in *The Quarterly Review*, vol. xxxii, no. 63 (1825), which directs attention to the originality of Niebuhr and Mitford, whom it describes as deserving the credit of the earliest modern discoverers in Grecian and Roman history, and to whose account of the origin of the agrarian laws, as well as that of the Roman army, Arnold offers a warm tribute. While deprecating agreement with some of Niebuhr's paradoxes, he goes on to vindicate the claims of the true, as distinguished from the false, spirit of enquiry.

[3] A *History of Greece* (1835) was one of the many historical books of Thomas Keightley, who also wrote a *History of the War of Greek Independence* (1830) and a much used *Mythology of Ancient Greece and Italy* (1831). Keightley, who bears the responsibility of a considerable proportion of historical instruction in this country in the earlier half of the century, began, like a good history master, with *Outlines of General History* (1815), which held its humble place for many years. It was followed by a large number of school-books and publications of a kindred description, and, as a historical writer, he earned the respect of many scholars, together with the gratitude of a long succession of schoolmasters. The *History of Greece*, if it may be taken as an

> 'I need not tell you,' Arnold writes to Bunsen in 1836, 'how entirely I have fed upon Niebuhr; in fact, I have done little more than put his first volume into a shape more fit for general, or at least for English, readers, assuming his conclusions to be proved when he was obliged to give the proof in detail.'

Yet the work, as a whole, was very far from being a mere second-hand reproduction; his independence of judgment and openness of outlook would, in any case, have made this impossible; and it was precisely in the period before reaching which his predecessor's narrative breaks off, and in his account of the mighty conflict of the second Punic war itself that Arnold's powers as a historian rise to their height. His capacity for military and geographical expositions and statements here found the amplest opportunity for display: he loved this side of his task, and, as he writes, 'thirsted for Zama[2].' At the same time, no student or writer of history has ever been more conscious than Arnold of the responsibility implied in Acton's memorable saying[3] that 'if we lower our standard in History, we cannot uphold it in Church and State.' When speaking, with that inborn modesty which was part of his constant homage to truth, of the many advantages which he lacked in carrying on the 'overpowering labour of writing the history of Rome,' he added:

> Yet I feel that I have the love of history so strong in me, and that it has been working in me so many years, that I can write something which will be read,

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example of his particular histories, is not free from slips—possibly not all his own—but is quite readable. He was a man of many literary sympathies, and his biographical account of Milton was long in the hands of the public. He was an Irishman by birth and education, like Dionysius Lardner, to the historical section of whose *Cabinet Cyclopaedia* (1829—49) he was a contributor, together with Thirlwall and Mackintosh, Scott, Southey and Moore, Gleig, Forster and (for chronology) Sir N. Harris Nicolas. This collection must be distinguished from Lardner's other series, *The Critical Library* and from *The Edinburgh Cabinet Library*, which also contained some historical works.

[1] These were published (posthumously) in 1845.

[2] See *Life and Correspondence* (1844), vol. II, p. 71.

[3] Inaugural Lecture *On the Study of History* (1895), *ad fin.*

> and which I trust will encourage the love of all things noble and just, and wise and lovely[1].

This sense of the grandeur and dignity of his theme the English historian of free Rome took over from the conception and development of his narrative into its style. Though clearness and directness of speech were like a natural law to him in all his public utterances, he told his nephew that it had cost him trouble so to 'pitch his style' in his *History* as to bring it to the level of his subject; and he afterwards said of his work, in words which it would be well if some historians not less eminent than he could have applied to theirs:

> I feel to regard the *History* more and more with something of an artistic feeling as to composition and arrangement of it—points on which the ancients laid great stress, and I now think very rightly[2].

To the great satisfaction of what was already an important part of Oxford, Arnold was, in 1841, appointed regius professor of modern history there, and at once threw himself with his wonted energy into the fulfilment of his new duties. Although he died in the following year, he had lived long enough to justify the only official tribute which his friends in power ever paid to his deserts; and it is probable that, before very long, he would have exchanged Rugby, where the chief work of his life had been done, for Oxford. He had enough insight as well as knowledge to perceive the folly of attempting to draw a hard and fast line between the civilisation of Greece and Rome and the progress of what is called modern history; and it is quite likely that, had his life been prolonged, he might have carried on his chief work to a much further point (he had in fact, so far back as 1824, written on the period from Augustus to Aurelian, which he declared he would not give up to anyone), or, better still, have written a history of Hellas, to which his sympathies were, most of all, attracted. But, in his inaugural lecture, he laid out the ground, in accordance with the accepted notion of the work of his chair, plainly and unostentatiously, and, in his first brief course, essayed a survey of the advancement of civilisation in England, more or less analogous to what Guizot, not long before, had achieved for France.

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[1] The concluding part of Arnold's *History of Rome* (*The Second Punic War*) was edited, with notes (1886), by his grandson William Thomas Arnold, who had already made a name for himself among our younger historians by his *Roman System of Provincial Administration*, published in 1879—81, and since twice re-issued.

[2] *Life and Correspondence*, vol. II, p. 246.

Arnold's judgment of Niebuhr as a historian of Rome, passed, as has been seen, from partial doubt into full acceptance; and it was not till 1855 that, in Sir George Cornewall Lewis's *Credibility of Early Roman History,* the conclusions adopted by Arnold were subjected to a searching analysis, in the light both of their genesis and of the comments which they had called forth. But this master of argument did not himself advance to constructive history.

The history of Rome, from nearly the point which Arnold had reached, was carried on by a Cambridge scholar who was a sincere admirer of his and a liberal theologian, although, in general, conservative in his tendencies and tastes. Charles Merivale could, in his old age, from his fair deanery at Ely, look back with satisfaction on a life in which he had achieved everything that his father would have wished him to achieve and would, in the son's modest opinion, have himself achieved with superior distinction. The elder son, Herman, gained a high reputation by his writings, more especially on colonial and Indian subjects, and by his services in the colonial and the India offices[1]. Charles seemed at one time likely to be chiefly renowned for pure scholarship—as it was, he had few equals in Latin verse composition, of which he was, through life, an enthusiastic practitioner[2]. But a visit to Rome in 1845, when he is found taking careful notes of the impression made on him by the imperial portrait-busts, seems to have finally confirmed in him the idea of writing a history of Rome from the Social war to Constantine, and thus bridging, as it were, the interval between Arnold (Niebuhr) and Gibbon. By the close of 1846, he had nearly completed the first volume. In 1848, he accepted the rectory of Lawford near Manningtree in Essex; and here—in the quiet Constable country—he finally matured the scheme of his *magnum opus*; benefiting much by the counsel of his old college friend, William Bodham Donne, a fine scholar and sound critic[3]. The first volume of *The History of the Romans under the Empire* was published in 1850, and the last in 1864. The first three volumes were so successful that, after in vain seeking to secure feminine aid to this end, he epitomised them under the title *The Fall of the Roman Republic* (1853). A better book of the kind, sober and stimulating at the same time, never blessed a generation of schoolmasters and schoolboys, no longer satisfied with Keightley and only on the eve of a flow of 'up to date' students' manuals. Merivale afterwards brought out a short *General History of Rome* (1875), besides subsidiary contributions to the history of the empire. The most interesting of these, as taking wide views of a great historical problem which famous predecessors had treated after their own fashion, is to be found in the companion Boyle lectures, *The Conversion of the Roman Empire* (1864) and *The Conversion of the Northern Nations* (1866).

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[1] See bibliography in a later volume.

[2] He published, in 1863, a Latin version of Keats's *Hyperion.*

[3] Donne, the schoolfellow and friend of Edward FitzGerald, and, in turn, librarian of the London Library and deputy examiner of plays, wrote not a little, including *Essays on the Drama,* worthy of preservation.

Merivale's chief book, if it does not quite bear out the comparisons which gratified the author in his old age, is a history of high merit and enduring value, composed in a style of simple dignity and dealing, in a spirit of both candour and justice, with the many difficult moral as well as intellectual problems which, in its course from Tiberius and, indeed, from Tacitus himself, downwards, call for solution. The narrative is based on an intimate knowledge of contemporary literature. Merivale, to begin with, was a close student of Cicero, whose *Life and Letters*, as translated from the German of Abeken, he edited (1854); before this, he had edited Sallust (1852); and he was not less familiar with Tacitus and Suetonius than he was with his beloved Lucan and Statius. Thus, his *History* was as free from pragmatic dryness and preconceived onesidedness as it was from mere fine writing, which his reserved and rather humourous nature abhorred. On the other hand, he was lacking in complete command of the primary sources of Roman history and had only partially investigated the unwritten remains of Roman life and its surroundings. He was pre-Mommsen in his unavoidable neglect of epigraphic material, and could not, in most cases, bring to bear upon his theme the observation of a traveller. While, in these respects, he still belonged to an older school of historians, he shared with the newer their freer outlook upon men and things, and the single-minded pursuit of truth by the application of the critical method. He is no more 'without bias' than is Niebuhr or Arnold, or any historian whose mind is merged in his work; but the point of view from which he favours monarchical government is a different one from Mommsen's. It may, perhaps, be added that Merivale's Cambridge life had gone some way towards teaching him the advantages of a knowledge of men as well as of things—though his fellow *Saturday* reviewers he had, for the most part, only known, when there, *de haut en bas*: no doubt, the correct 'apostolic attitude—and that, in his later days, when, as chaplain to the Speaker, he regularly watched the House of Commons and its vicissitudes, he found that he had gone through a good preliminary training in his study of Roman public character and life[1].

An authoritative position among English historians of ancient Rome was long held by George Long's *Decline of the Roman Republic* (1864—74), of which the first volume appeared in the same year as the last of Merivale's principal work. Long was one of the most productive classical scholars of his day, and one of the most trustworthy teachers of general history: besides a long series of volumes of Charles Knight's *Penny Cyclopaedia*, published by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge[2], he edited the seven volumes of its *Biographical Dictionary*, which, although—or, perhaps, because—they covered only the letter A, remained the one precursor deserving the name of the later *Dictionary of National Biography*. Long's qualifications as a historian were not limited to indefatigable industry: he wrote with lucidity and judgment, and he had in him a strain of high philosophic morality such as became the translator of Marcus Aurelius.

The influence of the new school of historical criticism, as well as that of the great personality of Niebuhr, is conspicuous in both the English historians of Greece who adorned this age of our literature[3]. Their labours were almost simultaneous—for Grote's first two volumes appeared in 1845—rather more than a year after the publication of the last of Thirlwall's; and, of Grote, we know that he had been actively engaged upon the chief literary work of his life for more than twenty years. Although the pair were schoolfellows, their lives had lain in very different spheres of mental exertion—college and city; and they long remained quite unaware of their common devotion to the same subject of special study. It is all the more to Thirlwall's honour that, from the first, he should have welcomed so formidable a competitor; while Grote declared that, had Thirlwall's book appeared two or three years sooner, he would have abandoned his own design. In much the same spirit, some of the best qualified of judges—

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[1] See the clear and shrewd judgments in the letters printed in conjunction with Merivale's admirable *Autobiography*, which, unfortunately, extends only to 1880.

[2] Some reference to Charles Knight's historical publications, the importance of which for the spread of historical knowledge in wide circles should not be underestimated, will be found in the bibliography to a later chapter.

[3] Thirlwall's share in the translation of Niebuhr has been already mentioned. Grote wrote of Niebuhr in *The Westminster Review* (1843): his 'moral nature was distinguished not only by a fearless love of truth, but by a quality yet more remarkable among literary men—a hearty sympathy with the mass of the people.'

E. A. Freeman[1] above all—compared and contrasted the two great English historians of ancient Greece. Freeman, no doubt, is right in saying that, notwithstanding its relative conciseness, and the absence of the large excursive element to be found in Grote's book, Thirlwall's is primarily that of a scholar rather than of a man of affairs, and is free from all political passion—generally, to all appearance, even from political preferences. This unlikeness is, of course, partly due to the different genesis of the two works: Grote's was the execution of a great design, gradually but consciously formed, and harmonising with the writer's ideals of public life; Thirlwall's, originally intended for a contribution to Lardner's *Cyclopaedia*, was at first undertaken as little more than a *πάρεργον*, and, in its earlier age, inspired by no more ardent ambition than that of 'leaving the history of Greece in some respects in a better condition than I found it.'

Connop Thirlwall, whose literary life had begun with the publication, over his infant head, of a volume of his precocious *primitiae* in prose and verse, had early come to the conclusion that history and biography are 'the basis of polite literature'; but his linguistic gifts were always quite extraordinary[2], and brought him into early contact with many branches of learning. A version by him of Schleiermacher's essay on St Luke preceded his translation of Niebuhr, with Julius Hare. In 1831, the two Trinity fellows jointly founded the short-lived *Philological Museum*, in which appeared Thirlwall's masterly essay 'On the Irony of Sophocles,' which, of itself, would suffice to prove him a critic of rare perceptive power. Before settling down into the country living which gave him the necessary leisure for writing the *History of Greece*, he had been, very effectively, engaged in academic controversy and shown that, when he chose, he could wield a trenchant pen. His *History*—for of the wise ecclesiastical statesmanship and immovable sense of duty which marked his episcopal life nothing can be said here—was worthy of a fully furnished mind and of a self-controlled character. The progress of the narrative sustains the reader's interest by a style which holds him easily and naturally; as it happens, while the opening of the work is not its most remarkable portion (for ethnological research is not held to have been Thirlwall's strongest point), the later volumes, especially those which treat of the struggle with Macedon and the conquests of Alexander the Great, are, in some respects, more successful than the corresponding portions of Grote's narrative. Although his habit of mind was critical, the author of *Letters to a Friend* was not without tenderness of soul; and it would be strange if one of the noblest among the qualities that distinguished him in life—a consistent hatred of injustice—were not found reflected in his *History*. Yet, at times, in his desire to be fair, he places a curious restraint upon himself, as in his account of the death of Socrates, following on a more than adequate tribute to the patriotism of Aristophanes.

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[1] See his *Historical Essays*, 2nd ser. (1873), chapter IV, 'The Athenian Democracy' *et al.*

[2] After his appointment to the see of St David's, he, in six months, mastered Welsh sufficiently to be able to preach in that tongue; and, when blindness came upon him at the last, he employed his leisure in rendering passages dictated to him into Latin, Greek, German, Italian, Spanish, French and Welsh.

Thirlwall, though he cannot be said to have been superseded by Grote, must, if the highest standard is impartially applied to the whole historical achievements of both, be allowed to be surpassed by him. Grote's is, or used to be, not unfrequently cited as a signal example of the historical work which has been produced in England without the training of the academical specialist and which thus conspicuously exhibits the vivifying effects of a direct contact with public life and a knowledge of the world, with its interests and motives of action. Apart, however, from the fact that, in Grote's younger days, at the English universities, such men as Arnold and Thirlwall had, virtually, to strike out for themselves the path of critical historical studies, it should be remembered that his own training was full and protracted as a student of both moral and mental philosophy in general, and of those of its branches, in particular, which are intimately connected with the philosophy of history. This training was carried on, partly as a discipline of private enquiry and study, and partly under the influence of the school or party of which Bentham was the founder or 'spiritual father,' and of which James Mill was the indefatigable prophet. Grote, therefore, like those Athenian followers of wisdom in hall or garden with whom his mind loved to dwell, cherished in himself those instincts of academic life which have little to do with degree courses and examinations, and, both in the early days of the new university of London and during his later official connection with University college, showed the warmest interest in the advancement of higher studies[1].

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[1] See Croom Robertson's notice of Grote in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. XXIII (1890). This should be read with Mrs Grote's *Personal Life of George Grote*, which shows how deeply the creative energy of Grote was indebted to his wife's sympathetic devotion.

To the arduous service exacted from Grote in his early manhood by the important banking-house with which he was connected by birth was added a political activity extending from 1820, when he came forward with a temperate *Statement of the Question of Parliamentary Reform* in response to an *Edinburgh* article by Sir James Mackintosh, to his final retirement from parliament in 1842. He had been elected for the City at the end of 1831, having, at the beginning of the year, in a second pamphlet, *The Essentials of Parliamentary Reform,* re-stated those political principles to which he consistently adhered, and which included the advocacy of secret and frequent elections. But, so early as 1823, he had been so deeply interested in the study of Greek history that his wife's suggestion, 'Suppose you try your hand,' instantly caught fire ; and, from this time forward, he engaged in the collection of notes and extracts towards that end. In April 1826, in an article, a review of Clinton's *Fasti Hellenici*[1], in *The Westminster Review,* of which the editor, Dr (afterwards Sir John) Bowring, recognised the unusual value, Grote had taken occasion to examine at length the claims of Mitford's *History of Greece* to the reputation which it still enjoyed and which was fervently upheld by Clinton, and to predict that, should Greek history 'ever be rewritten with care and fidelity, these claims would be prodigiously lowered.' Business and politics alike long prevented him from devoting the necessary time to his great historical project; but, when, with the requisite leisure, the day of fulfilment came at last, it did not find him unprepared. Niebuhr's influence upon Grote[2], and his intimacy with Sir George Cornewall Lewis, alike led him to enter with very great interest into the earliest section of the work before him; and March 1845 at last saw the publication of the first two volumes of the *History of Greece.* Although this instalment of the work was occupied with the legendary rather than the properly historical part of its subject, the high merit of these volumes, and the thoroughness with which they applied the critical method to Hellenic mythology, ensured to them an immediate success; Hallam, though far more conservative as a critic than Cornewall Lewis, with whom he joined in according a warm welcome to Grote's production, declared that he had never known a book take so rapid a flight to the highest summit. Although the earliest portion of the work is, perhaps, in some respects, less conclusive than the body of the historical narrative that follows, it bears upon it, like the rest, the stamp of both independence and freedom of judgment. The review of the Homeric problem, following on the general survey of Greek mythology, specially exemplifies these qualities and offers a good test of Grote's powers as a critical scholar.

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[1] As to Mitford's *History of Greece* (1785—1810), cf. *ante*, vol. x, p. 320. Grote's strictures on the work are unsparing and, while pronouncing Mitford's treatment of his authorities as unsatisfactory, directly condemn the political tendency manifested without disguise or mitigation in the whole of it, more especially in the portions written after the French revolution. Henry Fynes Clinton's *Fasti Hellenici: the Civil and Literary Chronology of Greece* appeared in 1824—34, and were succeeded, in 1845—50, by *Fasti Romani: the Civil and Literary Chronology of Rome and Constantinople.* After passing from parliamentary into literary life, he devoted an enormous amount of time to his chronological labours. He seems to have been wholly incapable of doubt with regard to facts and figures as recorded on the written page, and, notwithstanding his extraordinary industry and accuracy as a recorder, must be viewed as a rather belated example of the pre-critical age of ancient history studies.

[2] In 1843 there appeared in *The Westminster Review* (vol. xxxix) an article by Grote on Niebuhr's *Griechische Heroengeschichten* (1842) which treats with much acumen both the question of the origin of myths and the Homeric poems in particular.

The remaining volumes appeared in a fairly regular and quick sequence; the circumstance that the twelfth and last volume, published in 1856, was three years behind the eleventh being due partly to the labour entailed by the revision of the previous volumes for later editions, partly, perhaps, to uncertainty in the author's mind as to the ultimate limits of the work. During its progress, it absorbed his literary labours almost entirely; in 1847, however, when on the eve of giving to the world its most vital portion, the review of the history of the great Athenian democracy, he spared time to put on paper his views as to the progress of the earliest of the series of revolutionary movements in mid-nineteenth century Europe, the conflict between the Swiss confederation and the *Sonderbund*[1]. As the historian of Greece drew nearer to the close of his work, he finally made up his mind to reserve for fuller treatment in a separate book the philosophy which he expounded in *Plato and the Companions of Sokrates* (1865); but he did not, as he had at first intended, proceed to a complete examination of the philosophy of Aristotle[2]. His historical work proper had come to an end some time before his death. Yet, he may be esteemed happy in that he ended his intellectual life where he had begun it; for, if other great historians have reared their historical works on the substratum of philological, legal or other studies, with him it was 'divine philosophy' which had suggested the ideals that were before him in his narrative of Greek, or, perhaps, it might better be said of Attic, life and thought. He died on 18 June 1871. He had refused Gladstone's offer of a peerage; but he was buried in Westminster abbey, and a bust of him was erected there.

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[1] Grote's *Seven Letters on the Recent Politics of Switzerland* were the product of a visit to that country in the late summer of 1847. His sympathies, of course, were with the liberal cantons; but the *Letters* showed discrimination as to the faults on both sides, and gained the approval of a very clear-sighted judge of contemporary politics, queen Victoria's consort prince Albert.

[2] See bibliography.

Of the criticisms to which Grote's great work, as a whole, has been subjected, two seem specially deserving of notice, since, at the same time, they point to characteristics from which it derives much of its value, and not a little of the power of attraction which it exercises. For, notwithstanding its undeniable *longueurs*, and a certain formlessness, due to the contempt for the artifices of composition and style observable in Grote as in nearly all the members of the philosophical school which he followed, the *History* has a fascination of its own from which few will escape who read consecutively at least the last ten volumes. Grote's work—with the exception, if it be such, of its first two volumes—is, practically, political. Herein lies at once its strength and its limitation. The investigation of the *origines* of Hellenic national life (partly, no doubt, in consequence of the condition, in his younger days, of philological and ethnological science) hardly entered into the range of his closer studies; while it would have been equally out of keeping alike with his natural gifts and with the unimaginative atmosphere in which his own intellectual powers had ripened that he should have been able to give colour and glow to his picture of Periclean Athens, albeit the very centre of his entire *History*. As to the former restriction, apart from the drawbacks chargeable on the period of learning to which he belonged, it is much to his credit that, in discussing ethnological problems, he should not have surrendered his judgment even to the authority to whose guidance he was under the greatest obligation, as in the case of K. O. Müller and his *Dorians*. In the matter of pure scholarship, Grote had to undergo (and could afford to undergo) attacks like those of Richard Shilleto. But there was some force in the broader-minded criticism that, in his attention to political problems and the phenomena of the working out of these, he neglected social and economic conditions. And, since the history of the Athenian democracy was, to him, the very heart and kernel of the history of Greece, it must be allowed that this way of looking at his subject causes a certain impression of incompleteness in his great work, although, of course, inasmuch as a history is not a handbook, he was wholly within his rights in determining what ground that work should cover. At the same time, it is difficult not to think that Grote's republican instincts, to which we owe his sympathetic account of Epaminondas, prejudiced his general view of the Macedonian period, and of Alexander the Great in particular, if it did not, as Merivale paradoxically put it, cause him to break off his story just where 'it became interesting[1].'

But in what, as has been hinted, may be regarded as the main thread in the woof of his fabric, in the history of Athens and of her constitution, and of its influence upon the destinies and the achievements of the Athenian people, Grote accomplished a *κτῆμα ἐς ἀεί*, which communicated its qualities to the whole of his historic work, and which, whatever exceptions may be taken to some of the details of the narrative, remains, and probably always will remain, without a parallel. The age of political reform, or of aspirations for reform, throughout Europe, and the mind of a reformer familiar with the struggle on behalf of high political inspirations, or reaching out for the realisation of ulterior ideals—these both live in Grote's volumes and give life to them. Athenian history had been miswritten from the days of Xenophon to those of Mitford; and the strength of a great writer, of whose nature political thought and political endeavour had come to form part, was required to redress the balance. Grote's love of liberty joined with his fundamental sense of justice in producing a sympathetic though candid relation of the progress of the Athenian constitution and of Athenian public life from Clisthenes to Pericles, in whom this progress reached its height; and nowhere does that sense of justice shine forth more conspicuously than in his temperate, though still sympathetic, narrative of the ensuing decline. He refuses to set down the sophists as agents in this decline, or to draw a contrast between them and Socrates, whom he shows to have been, though generously distinguished from them in some respects, yet essentially one of their body. Thus, he is neither daunted nor depressed by the view of earlier historians, but rather stimulated to opposition, though, even in opposition, he maintains his fairness and his self-control.

On Grote's work was largely founded *The History of Greece* by George William Cox (who, in his later years, assumed the title of baronet), also known by the part taken by him in ecclesiastical controversies, more especially in that concerning bishop Colenso, whose life he wrote. Cox was associated with Freeman in their early publication of *Poems Legendary and Historical* (1850), and afterwards gained a considerable reputation by a succession of popular historical volumes. Perhaps the most striking part of his *History of Greece* is to be found in its mythological chapters, where he followed Max Müller's method of interpretation, which he carried to a great length in other books; as a whole, the *History* has not achieved a lasting reputation.

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[1] Cited by Gooch, *History and Historians*, etc, p. 318.

The most notable contribution to the history of Greece since the appearance of Grote's work, which it can claim the honour of supplementing worthily, is George Finlay's *History of Greece from its conquest by the Romans to the present time* (146 B.C.—A.D. 1864). Such is its title in the collective Oxford edition, which includes the successive *Histories of Greece under the Romans, of the Byzantine and Greek Empires* and *of Greece under Othoman and Venetian domination.* The subject of this voluminous narrative, which, in part, was treated afresh in a separate work—the *History of Greece from the Conquest by the Crusaders to that by the Turks, and of the Empire of Trebizond* (the eastern provinces of the Byzantine empire)—was continued by the same indefatigable pen in a *History of the Greek Revolution.* In certain stages of the revolution, including Byron's difficult experiences at Mesolonghi, Finlay had in his early manhood taken some part. After the advent of Capodistrias as president of Greece under the protection of the great powers had at last seemed to offer the prospect of a settled condition to the heroic little country, he resolved to take up his abode there, hoping to 'aid in putting Greece into the road that leads to a rapid increase of production, population, and material improvement.' When, he adds in his brief autobiography, he had wasted as much money as he possessed, he 'turned his attention to study, and planned writing a true history of the Greek Revolution in such a way as to exhibit the condition of the people' and to be of real use to future generations. Thus, his work, like certain other celebrated histories, but after a fashion of its own, and on the primary basis of actual dearly-bought experience, went back from the near to the remoter past; but, however embittering may have been the disappointment with which this single-minded and noble-hearted student looked back upon his literary labours as well as upon his experiences as a landowner, he would not allow these feelings to narrow his horizon or to depress his historical standpoint, although he took into consideration the social, as well as the political, side of his subject. His *History* begins with a tribute to the effects of the conquests of Alexander the Great, highly valued by Freeman (to whom, it may be observed, Finlay's reputation as a historian was not a little indebted); and the students, now many and distinguished, of the history of that Byzantine empire which, as Freeman says, may claim Alexander as its founder, will not refuse to recognise in Finlay a pioneer among those who have essayed the continuous, as well as the exact, treatment of an all but incomparable theme. In his later years, Finlay, whose entire work stretches over more than two thousand years, engaged largely in journalism, without, however, at any time abandoning the main interest of his life's work. Unfortunately, his letters from Greece, of which the most important were addressed to *The Times* from 1864 to 1870, have never been collected in his native country; or they would form a characteristic, though depressing, epilogue to the story of the great decline and fall, followed by a truncated *risorgimento*, which he made it the chief business of his later life to unfold.

Although, as will be shown in a subsequent chapter, many English scholars and antiquaries have, by their researches and criticisms, rendered great services to the study of ancient history, and strengthened its foundations while widening and diversifying its scope, the historians who have more particularly devoted themselves to this field of labour have not been numerous. This may partly be due to a narrowing of the field, by fencing off the prehistoric section, and leaving it mainly, though not exclusively, in the first instance, to the archaeologist; partly, it is accounted for by the preponderating attention given, in the second and third quarters of the century, to medieval historical research and investigation, largely because of the popularity of the romanticists in our literature. By the side of the names already mentioned, that of Edward Augustus Freeman would have been more conspicuous than it is had not—primarily through his love of architecture—these medieval influences long sought to claim him as their own. His work as a historian will thus, as a whole, be more appropriately estimated in a later volume. But, in the first and only published volume of his *History of Federal Government* (1863), written when he was at the very height of his productivity, and intended as but the first instalment of a work comprising, also, the history of federalism in medieval and modern times (inclusive of the Swiss and German leagues, the United Provinces of the Netherlands and the United States of America), he produced a memorable work on a notable subject of ancient history. He was careful to insist on his proper theme being, not the history, or even the military history, of a period, but the history of an idea in its actual development. In the same spirit, he abstained from identifying himself, like other historians, great or not, of Greece, with party or faction; with the result that few, if any, of his books are so instructive as this, the beginning of what might have proved one of the most important of constitutional histories. Among Freeman's *Historical Essays*, those of the second series (published in 1873), devoted to ancient history, have a freshness and, so to speak, an ease of manner which mark them out among his contributions to periodicals. Finally, his *History of Sicily* (1891—4), almost uniquely fitted as the theme was for illustrating his favourite dogma of the unity of history[1], offered him an opportunity of returning to his Greek studies. He carried on the work, though not completely, to the death of Agathocles (300 B.C.), and the fourth volume was piously edited by his son-in-law (Sir) Arthur Evans. From this point, it was to have proceeded to the Roman, and thence to the Norman, conquest of Sicily, so that Roger was to take his place by the side of Gelon. This fragment in four volumes, owing not a little to the stimulating influence of personal observation[2], is one of the most enjoyable of Freeman's books, and will survive by the side of works which have treated the subject of ancient Sicily with greater completeness and with more marked attention to its singularly attractive literary side.

Although Freeman's *History of Sicily* throws much light on the history of Carthage, the later centre of Phoenician life, it was no part of his plan to essay a narrative of the whole of her fortunes—a task which, on a scale befitting its importance, still remains unperformed[3]. The history of Phoenicia as a whole, however, was included in the vast field of the labours of George Rawlinson, brother of Sir Henry Rawlinson, whose memoir he wrote, and whose philological discoveries find mention in a later chapter. Canon Rawlinson, who had long taken an active part in Oxford administrative work, was, by his appointment to the Camden professorship of history in the university, enabled to devote himself more exclusively to historical research; but, already in the previous year, *The History of Herodotus* (1858—60) was completed, in which a new English version was accompanied by a large apparatus of historical and ethnological notes, based, to a great extent, on the cuneiform and hieroglyphic discoveries of Sir Henry Rawlinson and Sir J. Gardner Wilkinson. During his occupation of his chair, George Rawlinson published a succession of histories designed to bring home to the public the general, as well as the particular, importance of recent discoveries and researches in the near east for the history of the ancient world. His deeply-rooted conservatism, which displayed itself both in his contributions to biblical and other theological works and in his share in the religious controversies of his day also asserted itself in his historical productions. But it was of service to him, in the gradual execution of a great design, which sought to cover, in turn, the history, geography and antiquities of the seven great oriental monarchies, as well as of Egypt and Phoenicia, by leading him to avoid rashness and crudity of conjecture, and, in the earlier of his volumes in particular, to build up foundations likely to be of use to future historians[1].

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[1] 'In Sicily at least,' he writes, 'there is no room for an "ancient" school and a "modern".'

[2] Freeman repeatedly visited Sicily; so that, as he says, many of the places of which he speaks in this work were as familiar to him as his own house; on the other hand, he found it very difficult to discuss new facts in his reading as he had done when writing his *History of the Norman Conquest*.

[3] Among later English writers, Reginald Bosworth Smith (better known as the biographer of Lord Lawrence) has made it the subject of a useful monograph (1878), which was able to take advantage of the rather loosely recorded researches of N. Davis.

Works on the history of Greek and Latin literature, inclusive of writings where historical narrative and biography are welded into an organic whole with literary criticism, must be left for notice elsewhere. There, notice will, also, be taken, among Sir William Smith's invaluable aids to classical study, of his *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography* (1844—9), which materially helped to advance the study of ancient history on critical lines, and that *of Greek and Roman Geography*, which dealt with an indispensable adjunct to, or, rather, an integral part of, that study (1854—7). His *Dictionary of the Bible* was published in 1863; that of *Christian Biography*, in which Wace was his coadjutor, from 1877 to 1887.

Henry Hart Milman's *History of Latin Christianity*, and, indeed, the whole of his course as a historical writer, connect themselves so closely with the beginnings of critical history in England, already illustrated in the present chapter from the works of Arnold, Thirlwall and Grote, that it seems most appropriate to speak of him here, together with one or two other writers whose works, in part, cover the same ground as his.

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[1] Henry Francis Pelham, canon Rawlinson's successor as Camden professor, was prevented by temporary loss of eyesight as well as by other causes from completing more than a fragment of the *History of the Roman Empire* projected by him; and nothing but this, together with a volume of *Outlines of Roman History* and a number of essays and articles in the same field, remains to attest his unusual powers, though he did much to advance historical research in and beyond his university.

The earliest work with which this rarely accomplished man of letters and courageous, though at no time other than reverent, thinker came forward as a historical writer was *The History of the Jews* (1829). The 'poet-priest,' as Byron called him, was already conspicuous among the poetic dramatists of his generation, as he was among the writers of hymns; and he had very appropriately filled the chair of poetry at Oxford[1]. *The History of the Jews* had, originally, been written for *The Family Library*, and, notwithstanding the candour of whatever came from its author's hand, gave some indications of the reserve befitting sober treatment of its subject[2]. Nevertheless, the book made its mark, in the words of a wakeful observer, as

> the first decisive inroad of German theology into England, the first palpable indication that the Bible can be studied like another book; that the characters and events of the sacred history could be treated at once critically and reverently.

Even Arnold (whose personal feelings as to the Jews could hardly have entered into the matter) was not altogether comfortable. But Milman, in whose moral texture there was a strand of uncommon courage, was not dismayed, and, instead of accommodating the further work which he had in preparation to the requirements of the series in which *The History of the Jews* had appeared, prepared himself for its execution on a wider basis, while, at the same time, collecting materials for an annotated edition of *The Decline and Fall.* This was published in 1839, accompanied by a life of Gibbon and selections from his correspondence, and, enlarged and revised in a later edition with the cooperation of other eminent historical scholars, held its own till, in our day, it has been superseded in an edition embodying the results of more recent research. *The History of Christianity from the Birth of Christ to the Abolition of Paganism in the Roman Empire* was itself not published till 1840, and was followed in 1854—5, by the author's *magnum opus, The History*

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[1] While holding it, he produced translations from Sanskrit poetry. At a later date, he published an edition of Horace, and versions of *Agamemnon* and *Bacchae.*

[2] Grote, in *The Westminster Review* (vol. xxxix, 1843), spoke of it as 'written in a perfectly religious spirit, but exhibiting some disposition to economise the supernatural energy.'

of Latin Christianity, including that of the Popes to Nicolas V. This work raised the reputation of Milman as a historian to a high pinnacle. Froude (who had reasons for knowing Milman's magnanimity) spoke of it as 'the first historical work in the English language'; and A. P. Stanley described his future brother-dean's achievement as 'in fact, a complete epic and philosophy of medieval literature.' Such praise seems too high; for, while Milman's book proves him capable of viewing a great subject both in its historical proportions and in its inner coherence, and of dealing with its main features and, indeed, with its main problems in a large spirit of comprehension and of insight into both men and institutions, it is lacking in certain other qualities. Of these, in view of Milman's previous literary record, it would not be easy to explain the absence, if such deficiencies always admitted of explanation. In a word, Milman, in his *History*, seems to be without the imaginative force of his great predecessor, which, in Gibbon, reflected itself in the mirror of a truly grand style, such as, perhaps, no other subject could have so appropriately sustained. On the other hand, no commendations could be more just than those which, so long as the book continues to be read, will continue to be bestowed on its breadth and generosity of judgment—the qualities of which ecclesiastical history frequently stands in need, but with which the writers of it are too often insufficiently endowed. It was the possession of these gifts which led no less competent a judge than Milman's later successor at St Paul's, dean Church, to express the wish that Milman should undertake a history of the reformation—a subject perhaps less august than that chosen by him, but one with which no man dwelling between Rome and the remote regions of Britain could have been more safely trusted than Milman to treat loftily, perspicuously, fearlessly, justly.

The verdict of the world—the clerical world in especial—was, at first, less favourable, or, at all events, less articulate. But, in 1849, Lord Russell (he, too, not wanting in courage) promoted Milman from the Westminster canonry held by him together with the rectory of St Margaret's to the deanery of St Paul's, where he acquitted himself of the duties of his office admirably. At the time of his death (24 September 1868), his *Annals of St Paul's* was passing through the press: in his later years, he had written a memorial notice of Macaulay (for the Royal society), besides historical essays of value, which, likewise, were published posthumously. His chief work will maintain its place, because of the great mass of material which, with equal judgment and sincerity, he has compressed within its limits, and because of the open-mindedness and magnanimity which are even rarer in the historians of great periods and problems than is the constructive ability requisite for their comprehensive treatment.

It is difficult to speak of the eminent historian whose name stands forth even on the illustrious roll of the deans of St Paul's without also recalling the brilliant writer and single-minded champion of religious toleration who, during the last five years of Milman's life, held the deanery of the sister cathedral, commemorated by him, in his turn, in a monograph testifying, at least, to his desire to identify himself with the great minster committed to his charge. Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, though neither a great historian nor a profound theologian, deserves to be remembered in the annals of English literature as well as in those of English public life, primarily in its religious and educational aspects. His *Life of Arnold* (1844) is one of those biographies which will never lose their value; for, although it cannot claim to be one of the masterpieces of national biography, inasmuch as it fails to give anything like a complete account either of the man or of his work, it possesses that kind of unity and force which spring from an absolute projection of the author into his narrative, which glows with the noble enthusiasm of a faithful disciple. Stanley's whole nature was pervaded by the influence of Arnold, and, though the master's simple, and, indeed, severe, manliness never could and never can appropriately be made the object of a cult, the example of his biographer, whose geniality and tolerance were gifts of his own, proves how potent and enduring was that influence, which had been 'the lodestar of his early life.' This it is which makes the book, though, apart from the letters, far less rich than many other biographies in illustrative detail, singularly attractive, and does away with Stanley's fears that he might, by exaggeration of language, have done harm to the object of his reverence.

Neither the outward circumstances of Stanley's career, which ran smoothly, as became that of the kindliest of men, with the most favourable of family connections, nor the greater part of his extraordinary activity as a preacher, lecturer and writer, must detain us here. Marked early for preferment, he found himself a canon of Canterbury in 1851—the year in which his exertions as an academical reformer had secured to him the secretaryship of the Oxford university commission; and, in the following year, he started on his memorable tour in Egypt and Palestine, in attendance on the prince of Wales. His canonical residence bore literary fruit in his *Memorials of Canterbury* (1854)—four essays, in which that on the well-worn subject the murder of Becket attracted attention; and his eastern tour in his *Sinai and Palestine*, a historian's book of travel, any defects in which (and it met with censure in certain very high quarters) may be forgiven in consideration of the force with which it brings home to the reader the associations, sacred and other, of the land it describes. This labour of love, generously furthered by aid not less generously acknowledged, was, like the biography with which his literary life had begun, entirely congenial to him. Its success, no doubt, helped to bring about his appointment as professor of ecclesiastical history at Oxford (1861). His first course of professorial lectures, dealing with the eastern church, attracted attention by the oriental character-portraits introduced into the account of the council of Nicaea, and by other passages. Then followed two series of lectures on the history of the Jewish church (from Abraham to Samuel, and thence to the fall of Jerusalem), of which his insight into historical character again forms a most attractive feature; for the time had passed when, as in Milman's earlier days, worthy people 'were shocked at hearing Abraham called a sheikh.' At least equally striking in these lectures was the freedom of critical enquiry which they displayed, though the remark that 'what Niebuhr was to Arnold, Ewald was to Stanley' may, perhaps, err on the side of overstatement. In 1872 came out *Lectures on the Church of Scotland*, delivered at Edinburgh; to *Memorials of Westminster Abbey* (1867) reference has already been made. The book was criticised, with some severity, by Freeman, whose review was, at first, attributed to Green; on the other side may be remembered, as a notable tribute to the encouragement derived from Stanley by many students, that Green was not only impelled to historical work by Stanley's Oxford lectures, but declared that it was from these that he first learned the principle of fairness.

Stanley's successor in his Oxford chair, William Bright, will be remembered, if only for his extraordinary industry in the amassing of materials, which he arranged with so much lucidity that his *History of the Church*, A.D. 315—451 (1860) has been accepted as a standard manual for theological students. Although this book was composed for the special purpose it has fulfilled, and is unfrequently illuminated by sayings so fine as that concerning Constantine the Great, who, 'while he gave much to his religion, did not give himself,' the author writes with a suppressed, but, at times, caustic, zeal that appears to have been one of his characteristics. His *Chapters of Early English Church History* (1878), though full of learning, are less attractive. He was, also, a hymn-writer of much power.

From a different point of view than that of Milman, and with an amplitude of detail such as would hardly have commended itself to the historian of later Christianity, or even to him of *The Decline and Fall* itself, Thomas Hodgkin undertook the task of supplementing the vast enterprise of Gibbon, where it undoubtedly fell short of the historical learning of the present age. Having, like Grote, been trained in the responsibilities of the higher spheres of business, it was not till a relatively advanced stage of his life that Hodgkin first came before the historical public in an attempt to introduce to wider circles the letters of the chief extant authority on Roman life under Gothic dominion, the great Theodoric's circumspect minister Cassiodorus (1886), whose works have found a notable editor in Mommsen. After this, during nearly twoscore years (while some of his earlier publications marked the gradual advance of his labours) he carried out the task which he had set himself, and which covered the entire period from the partition of the Roman empire between Valens and Valentinian to the death of Charles the Great. The eight volumes entitled *Italy and her Invaders* were complete in 1899. During the execution of this great undertaking his enthusiasm had never deserted him, either in the main course of his narrative or the many side-paths into which his unflagging desire for knowledge diverted his researches, aided by his experiences as a traveller. He was an accomplished archaeologist and a most attractive historical topographer, who had thus good reason for the sympathy which he felt with the genius of Ernst Curtius. His personal preferences, nevertheless, inclined to the medieval type of historical writing, and he was at least a chronicler, something after the manner of Barante, rather than a critical historian, and loved to reproduce at length the flow of the sources of which his learning had enabled him to appreciate the value. Thus, his narrative was wont to run into a lengthiness which was not altogether redeemed by the general charm of his style. Hodgkin, besides publishing some shorter pieces, contributed to *The Political History of England* a well-written volume on the period before the Norman conquest and composed an interesting monograph on the founder of the religious body to which he belonged and with whose spirit of humankindness he was signally imbued.

CHAPTER XV

SCHOLARS, ANTIQUARIES AND BIBLIOGRAPHERS

Classical Scholars

Early in the nineteenth century the most notable name in the world of classical scholarship was that of Richard Porson. A son of the parish clerk at East Ruston, near North Walsham, in Norfolk, he was born in 1759, and gave early proof of remarkable powers of memory. Thanks to the liberality of his friends, his education, begun in the neighbourhood of his birthplace, was completed at Eton and at Trinity college, Cambridge. He was elected Craven scholar in 1781, and first chancellor's medallist and fellow of Trinity in 1782. Ten years later, he lost his fellowship, solely because of his resolve to remain a layman; but, once more, his friends raised a fund which provided him with an annual income of £100, and, in the same year, he was unanimously elected regius professor of Greek, the stipend at that time being only £40. He lived mainly in London, where his society was much sought by men of letters. In November 1796, he married the sister of James Perry, editor of *The Morning Chronicle*, but he lost his wife in the following April. In 1806 he was appointed librarian of the London Institution, with a salary of £200 a year; and, in 1808, he died. He was buried in the ante-chapel of his college. In the same building is his bust by Chantrey. His portrait by Kirkby is in the dining-room of Trinity lodge; that by Hoppner, which has been engraved by Sharpe and by Adlard, is in the university library.

The first work that made him widely known was his *Letters to Travis* in 1788—9. Archdeacon Travis, in his *Letters to Gibbon*, had maintained the genuineness of the text as to the 'three that bear record in heaven' (1 *St John* v 7). Porson gave ample proof of its spuriousness, partly on the ground of its absence from, practically, all the Greek manuscripts. He thus supported an opinion which had been held by critics from the days of Erasmus, and had recently been affirmed afresh by Gibbon[1], who regarded Porson's reply as 'the most acute and accurate piece of criticism since the days of Bentley.'[2]

This was immediately followed by Porson's preface and notes to a new edition of Toup's *Emendations on Suidas* (1790). It was by a copy of that critic's Longinus, presented to Porson in his boyhood by the headmaster of Eton, that the great Greek scholar had been first drawn to classical criticism. He also owed much to the influence of Bentley. 'When I was seventeen,' he once said, 'I thought I knew everything; as soon as I was twenty-four, and had read Bentley, I found I knew nothing.'[3] He calls Bentley's work on Phalaris an 'immortal dissertation'[4]; he is said to have wept with delight when he found that his own emendations of the text of Aristophanes had been anticipated by Bentley, and the correctness of many of these emendations was confirmed by the subsequent collation of the famous manuscript at Ravenna[5].

In 1783 he had been invited by the syndics of the Cambridge university press to edit Aeschylus, but his offer to visit Florence with a view to collating the Laurentian manuscript was unfortunately rejected, the chairman of the syndics gravely suggesting that 'Mr Porson might *collect* his manuscripts at home.' The syndics had also unwisely insisted on an exact reprint of the old and corrupt text of Stanley's edition of 1663, and Porson naturally declined the task. Porson's partial revision of the text was printed by Foulis at Glasgow in 1794, but was not published until 1806; meanwhile, his corrections were surreptitiously incorporated in a folio edition, fifty-two copies of which were printed by the same firm in 1795; but in neither edition was there any mention of Porson's name[6].

His masterly edition of four plays of Euripides began in 1797 with the *Hecuba*; it was continued in the *Orestes* (1798) and *Phoenissae* (1799), and in the *Medea* (1801), where the editor's name appears for the first time. It was from Porson's transcript of the *Medea*, still preserved in the library of his college, that the so-called 'Porson type' was cut for the university press. In the preface to his edition of the *Hecuba*, he settled certain points of Greek prosody in a sense contrary to that of Hermann's early treatise on metres, but without complete proof. In 1800 Hermann produced a rival edition, attacking Porson's opinions; and, in 1802, Porson replied in a supplement appended to the preface of his second edition. This reply has justly been regarded by Jebb as 'his finest single piece of criticism.' He here lays down the law that determines the length of the fourth syllable from the end of the normal iambic or trochaic line, tacitly correcting Hermann's mistakes, but never mentioning his name.

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[1] *Decline and Fall*, chap. XXXVII, notes 117—122.

[2] *Miscellaneous Works*, vol. I, 159.

[3] Luard, H. R., in *Cambridge Essays*, 1857, p. 169 n.

[4] Note on *Medea*, 139 f.

[5] Luard, *l.c.* p. 153.

[6] David Murray's *R. and A. Foulis*, 1913, pp. 121 f.

Porson spent at least ten months in transcribing in his own beautiful hand the *Codex Galeanus* of the lexicon of Photius; in 1796 the transcript was destroyed by fire in London; a second transcript was prepared by Porson and deposited in the library of his college, and finally published by Dobree in 1822, fourteen years after Porson's death.

It is to be regretted that Porson failed to finish his edition of Euripides, and that he did not live to edit either Aristophanes or Athenaeus. He would doubtless have achieved far more, if the sobriety of his life had been equal to the honesty and truthfulness of his character. Parr, writing to Burney, said: 'He is not only a matchless scholar, but an honest, a very honest man'[1]; and Thomas Turton, the future bishop of Ely, in vindicating Porson's literary character against the attacks of an episcopal champion of an unscholarly archdeacon, declared that Porson 'had no superior' in 'the most pure and inflexible love of truth.'[2]

In the study of Attic Greek, Porson elucidated many points of idiom and usage, and established the laws of tragic metre. Bishop Blomfield, after speaking of Bentley and Dawes, says that 'Porson, a man greater than them all, added to the varied erudition and universal research of Valckenaer and Ruhnken, a nicety of ear and acquaintance with the laws of metre, which the former possessed but imperfectly, and the latter not at all.'[3] Of himself he modestly said: 'I am quite satisfied if, three hundred years hence, it shall be said that one Porson lived towards the close of the eighteenth century, who did a good deal for the text of Euripides.'[4] For Cambridge and for England, he became the creator of the ideal of finished and exact verbal scholarship, which prevailed for more than fifty years after his death.

Among Porson's older contemporaries was Samuel Parr of

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[1] Parr's *Memoirs*, vol. VII, p. 403.

[2] Crito Cantabrigiensis, *A Vindication of the Literary Character of Prof. Porson*, 1827, pp. 347 f.

[3] *The Edinburgh Review*, vol. XVII, p. 382.

[4] Rogers, *Table Talk*, *Porsoniana*, p. 334.

Harrow, and of Emmanuel and St John's, who was born twelve years before Porson, and survived him by seventeen. Headmaster of three schools in succession, he spent the last forty years of his life as perpetual curate and private tutor at Hatton, in Warwickshire. He attained considerable distinction as a writer of Latin prose, closely following Cicero and Quintilian in the long preface to his edition of a treatise on Cicero written about 1616 by Bellenden, and Morcelli in his stately epitaphs and other Latin inscriptions. Notwithstanding his extensive erudition, he accomplished little of permanent value; but he freely lavished his advice and his aid on others. Porson spent the winter of 1790—1 at Hatton, enriching his mind with the vast stores of Parr's library of more than 10,000 volumes. He was described by one who had surveyed all the literature associated with his life, as 'one of the kindest hearted and best read Englishmen' of his generation[1]; while Macaulay characterised his 'vast treasure of erudition' as 'too often buried in the earth, too often paraded with injudicious and inelegant ostentation, but still precious, massive, and splendid.'[2]

Among the minor lights of the age was Gilbert Wakefield, fellow of Jesus college, Cambridge, whose passion for tampering with the text of the classics is exemplified in his editions of Horace, Virgil and Lucretius. His notes on Lucretius are disfigured by his attacking 'the most brilliant and certain emendations of Lambinus' 'with a vehemence of abuse that would be too great even for his own errors.'[3] His Lucretius was completed in the same year as Porson's first edition of the *Hecuba*. Porson 'out of kindness' had forborne to mention certain conjectures on the text proposed by Wakefield; but his silence led to Wakefield's inditing a violent and hasty 'Diatribe' teeming with injudicious and intemperate criticism. In 1799 his treasonable expression of a hope that England would be invaded and conquered by the French led to his imprisonment for two years in Dorchester gaol. During his imprisonment he continued to correspond with Fox on points of scholarship, and, soon after his release, he died.

Porson had a high opinion of his earlier contemporary, John Horne Tooke, of St John's college, Cambridge. His reputation rests on *The Diversions of Purley* (1786), which certainly excited a new interest in etymology, and had the merit of insisting on the importance of the study of Gothic and Old English.

The date of its appearance also marks the birth of the science of comparative philology. In that year Sir William Jones, who had passed from the study of English, Attic and Indian law to that of the Sanskrit language, made a memorable declaration:

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[1] Baker-Mayor, *History of St John's College*, vol. I, p. 540.

[2] *Essays*, p. 612, ed. 1861.

[3] Munro's Lucretius, vol. I, p. 19, ed. 1873.

> The Sanscrit tongue...is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs and in the forms of grammar, than could have been produced by accident; so strong that no philologer could examine the Sanscrit, Greek, and Latin, without believing them to have been sprung from some common source.... There is a similar reason...for supposing that both the Gothic and the Celtic had the same origin with the Sanscrit. The old Persian may be added to the same family[1].

Dr Parr, who died in 1825, writes thus in his diary:

> England, in my day, may boast of a Decad of literary luminaries, Dr Samuel Butler, Dr Edward Maltby, bishop Blomfield, dean Monk, Mr E. H. Barker, Mr Kidd, Mr Burges, professor Dobree, professor Gaisford, and Dr Elmsley. They are professed critics: but, in learning and taste, Dr Routh of Oxford is inferior to none.

Martin Joseph Routh, who was born in 1755, died in 1854, in the hundredth year of his age, after holding the position of president of Magdalen for three and sixty years. In 1784 he edited the *Euthydemus* and *Gorgias* of Plato; he lived to produce the fifth volume of his *Reliquiae Sacrae* in 1848, and, at the age of seventy-two, summed up his long experience in the precept: 'I think, sir, you will find it a very good practice *always to verify your references.*'

Edward Maltby, the pupil of Parr and the friend of Porson, received valuable aid from both in supplementing a useful lexicon of Greek prosody, founded on Morell's *Thesaurus.* Educated at Winchester, and at Pembroke college, Cambridge, he was successively bishop of Chichester and of Durham.

The Porsonian tradition passed for a time from Cambridge to Oxford in the person of Peter Elmsley, of Winchester and of Christ Church, who was born in 1773 and died in 1825. At Florence, in 1820, he collated the Laurentian manuscript of Sophocles, and the earliest recognition of its excellence is to be found in the preface to his edition of the *Oedipus Coloneus* (1823). He also edited the *Oedipus Tyrannus*; and the *Heraclidae, Medea* and *Bacchae* of Euripides. As a scholar whose editorial labours were almost entirely confined to the Greek drama, he had a close affinity with Porson, who held him in high esteem, until he found him appropriating his emendations without mentioning his name. In all his editions, Elmsley devoted himself mainly to the illustration of the meaning of the text, and to the elucidation of the niceties of Attic idiom. He had also a wide knowledge of history, and, for the last two years of his life, was Camden professor of ancient history at Oxford.

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[1] *Asiatic Researches*, vol. 1, p. 422 (1786).

Elmsley's careful edition of the Laurentian *scholia* on Sophocles was published at the Clarendon press by Thomas Gaisford, who was born only six years later than Elmsley, and survived him by more than thirty. He was appointed regius professor of Greek at Oxford in 1812, and was dean of Christ Church for the last twenty-four years of his life. He first made his mark, in 1810, by his edition of Hephaestion's *Manual of Greek Metre*. He published an annotated edition of the *Poetae Minores Graeci*; but almost all the rest of his work was in the province of Greek prose. Thus, he prepared a variorum edition of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, and also edited Herodotus and Stobaeus, and the great lexicon of Suidas as well as the *Etymologicum Magnum*.

A certain deflection from the Porsonian tradition at Cambridge is exemplified by Samuel Butler, who was educated at Rugby and St John's, and was headmaster of Shrewsbury from 1798 to 1836, and bishop of Lichfield for the last three years of his life. For the syndics of the Cambridge press he edited Aeschylus, after Stanley's text, with the Greek *scholia*, and also with the notes of Stanley and his predecessors, and selections from those of subsequent editors, and a synopsis of 'various readings.' It was ably reviewed by Charles James Blomfield, who described it as 'an indiscriminate coacervation' of all that had been 'expressly written on Aeschylus,' and, many years afterwards, said of Butler, 'he was a really learned as well as amiable man, but his forte did not lie in verbal criticism.' He was interested in classic travel, and his *Atlas of Ancient Geography*, first published in 1822, passed through many editions, and was reprinted as late as 1907.

The Porsonian type of scholarship, represented at Oxford by Elmsley, was maintained at Cambridge by three fellows of Trinity: Dobree, Monk and C. J. Blomfield. The first of these, Peter Paul Dobree, was indebted to his birth in Guernsey for his mastery of French. He edited (with many additions of his own) Porson's *Aristophanica*, as well as Porson's transcript of Photius. He was regius professor of Greek for the last two years of his life (1823—5). His *Adversaria* on the Greek poets, historians and orators, as well as his transcript of the *Lexicon rhetoricum Cantabrigiense*, and his *Notes on Inscriptions*, were edited by his successor, James Scholefield, who, in 1828, produced, in his edition of Aeschylus, the earliest English attempt to embrace in a single volume the results of modern criticism on the text of that poet. While Dobree was a follower of Porson in the criticism of Aristophanes, he broke new ground as a critic of the Attic orators.

As professor of Greek, Porson was immediately succeeded by James Henry Monk, of Charterhouse and Trinity, afterwards dean of Peterborough, and bishop of Gloucester and Bristol. Following in the steps of Porson and Elmsley, Monk edited four plays of Euripides, the *Hippolytus* and *Alcestis* and the two *Iphigenias.* The year of his consecration as bishop was that of the first publication of his admirable *Life of Bentley* (1830).

Monk's fellow-editor of Porson's *Adversaria* in 1812 was Charles James Blomfield, who edited, with notes and glossaries, the *Prometheus, Septem, Persae, Agamemnon* and *Choëphoroe.* The *Prometheus* of 1810 was the first text of any importance printed by the Cambridge press in the 'Porson type.' The best part of Blomfield's edition of each of these plays was the glossary, a feature of special value in days when there was no good Greek and English lexicon. He also edited Callimachus, and collected (in the *Museum Criticum*) the fragments of Sappho, Alcaeus, Stesichorus and Sophron. For the last thirty-three years of his life, he was successively bishop of Chester and of London.

Among the ablest of Samuel Butler's pupils at Shrewsbury was Benjamin Hall Kennedy, fellow of St John's, who succeeded Butler as headmaster, a position which he filled with the highest distinction for thirty years. Born in 1804, he died in 1889, after holding the Greek professorship at Cambridge for the last twenty-two years of his life. His best-known works are his *Latin Primer*, and his *Public School Latin Grammar.* He also published, with translation and notes, the *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus, the *Oedipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles, the *Birds* of Aristophanes and the *Theaetetus* of Plato. His school edition of Virgil was followed by his Cambridge edition of the text. He produced many admirable renderings in Greek and Latin verse, as principal contributor to *Sabrinae Corolla,* and sole author of *Between Whiles.* His younger brother, Charles Rann Kennedy, is remembered as translator of Demosthenes.

The senior classic of 1830, Christopher Wordsworth, nephew of the poet, travelled in Greece, where he discovered the site of Dodona. He was afterwards headmaster of Harrow, and finally bishop of Lincoln. Of his classical publications, the most widely known is his 'pictorial, descriptive and historical' work on Greece. Breadth of geographic and historic interest, rather than minute scholarship, was the main characteristic of the able edition of Herodotus produced by his contemporary, Joseph Williams Blakesley, ultimately dean of Lincoln.

Edmund Law Lushington, the senior classic of 1832, is represented in literature mainly by the inaugural discourse *On the Study of Greek*, delivered in 1839 at the beginning of his long tenure of the Greek professorship at Glasgow. Wedded to Tennyson's youngest sister, he is happily described, in the epilogue to *In Memoriam*, as 'wearing all that weight of learning lightly like a flower.' The second place in the tripos of 1832 was won by Richard Shilleto, of Trinity (finally fellow of Peterhouse), who soon became famous as a private tutor in classics. A consummate master of Greek idiom, he produced notable editions of the speech *De Falsa Legatione* of Demosthenes, and of the first and second books of Thucydides, while his genius as an original writer of Greek verse was exemplified in fugitive fly-sheets in the style of Aristophanes or Theocritus. His distinguished contemporary, William Hepworth Thompson, regius professor of Greek from 1853 to 1867, and, for the last twenty years of his life, master of Trinity, produced admirable commentaries on the *Phaedrus* and *Gorgias* of Plato, and, by his personal influence, did much towards widening the range of classical studies in Cambridge. His dry humour is exemplified by many memorable sayings, while the serene dignity of his presence still survives in the portrait by Herkomer in the hall of his college. Thompson had a high regard for the original and independent scholarship of Charles Badham, of Wadham college, Oxford, and of Peterhouse, Cambridge. Badham gave ample proof of his ability and his critical acumen in his editions of three plays of Euripides, and of five dialogues of Plato. He was specially attracted to the school of Porson, and of the great Dutch scholar, Cobet, to whom he dictated a letter written on his death-bed at Sydney, where he passed the last seventeen years of his life as professor of classics and logic.

Among Thompson's contemporaries at Trinity was John William Donaldson, whose *New Cratylus* and *Varronianus* gave a considerable impulse to the study of comparative philology and ethnology. His name is also associated with a comprehensive work on *The Theatre of the Greeks*, an edition of Pindar and a Greek and a Latin grammar. A volume, in which he contended that the lost book of Jasher formed 'the religious marrow of the Scriptures,' caused much excitement in theological circles, and led to his resigning the headmastership of Bury St Edmunds school. He subsequently wrote an interesting work entitled *Classical Scholarship and Classical Learning*, and translated and completed K. O. Müller's *History of Greek Literature*. Donaldson's younger contemporary, Frederick Apthorp Paley, of Shrewsbury and St John's, was a man of wide and varied interests. An eager botanist, and an enthusiastic student of ecclesiastical architecture, he joined the church of Rome in 1846, returned to Cambridge as a private tutor from 1860 to 1874 and, after three years' tenure of a professorship in a catholic college in Kensington, spent the last eleven years of his life at Bournemouth. His edition of Aeschylus with Latin notes was followed by an English edition, which is widely recognised as his best work. He also edited Euripides, Hesiod, Theocritus and the *Iliad*. An incidental remark by Donaldson on certain resemblances between the *Iliad* and the late epic of Quintus Smyrnaeus led Paley to maintain that the Homeric poems in their present form were not earlier than the age of Alexander. In the preface to his Euripides he protests against the purely textual notes characteristic of the school of Porson.

Edward Meredith Cope, of Trinity, who was educated under Kennedy at Shrewsbury, is best known as the author of an elaborate introduction to the *Rhetoric* of Aristotle, which was followed by a comprehensive commentary. William George Clark, of Shrewsbury and Trinity, published in his *Peloponnesus*, in 1858, the results of a Greek tour taken in the company of Thompson. During his tenure of the office of public orator, from 1857 to 1869, a critical edition of Shakespeare, designed in 1860, was successfully completed by Clark and Aldis Wright[1]. Clark's name has been fitly commemorated by the establishment, at Trinity college, of the 'Clark Lectureship in the Literature of England.' His contemporary, Churchill Babington, of St John's, produced, in 1851—8, the *editio princeps* of four of the recently discovered speeches of Hyperides. He was also interested in botany, and in the birds of Suffolk, and was Disney professor of archaeology from 1865 to 1880. Born a year later than Clark and Babington, Hubert Ashton Holden, fellow of Trinity and afterwards headmaster of Ipswich, edited a school-text of Aristophanes, with an exhaustive *Onomasticon*, and produced elaborate commentaries on three of the treatises of Xenophon, and on eight of Plutarch's *Lives*, besides editing Cicero, *De Officiis*, and two of his speeches.

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[1] *Cf. ante*, vol. v, p. 280.

Kennedy's successor as regius professor of Greek was Richard Claverhouse Jebb, of Charterhouse and Trinity, who was elected public orator in 1869, professor of Greek at Glasgow in 1875, and at Cambridge in 1889. For the last sixteen years of his life he held the Cambridge professorship, and, for the last fourteen, was member for the university. He will long be remembered as the accomplished editor of Sophocles and Bacchylides, and as the eloquent author of *The Attic Orators*. His other works include an annotated text and translation of the *Characters* of Theophrastus, an *Introduction to Homer*, with lectures on modern Greece and on Greek poetry, and monographs on Erasmus and on Bentley. A humanist in the highest sense of the term, he assimilated the spirit of classical literature, and *The Attic Orators* revealed to the literary world the fact that one of the foremost among living Greek scholars was himself an artist in English prose. His Sophocles has been justly characterised as 'one of the most finished, comprehensive, and valuable works, in the sphere of literary exposition, which this age or any has produced,'[1] and these consummate qualities were also exhibited in his latest work, his complete edition of Bacchylides. His powers as a writer of classical verse had already been proved by his three *Pindaric Odes*, to one of which allusion was made by the poet laureate of the day in his dedication of *Demeter*. The most brilliant scholar of his time, he unconsciously portrayed his own gifts, when, in his admirable monograph on Bentley, he translated that great scholar's declaration that 'wide reading' and erudite 'knowledge of Greek and Latin antiquity' are not enough for the modern critic of an ancient author:

> A man should have all that at his fingers' ends.... But, besides this, there is need of the keenest judgment, of sagacity and quickness, of a certain divining tact and inspiration, as was said of Aristarchus—a faculty which can be acquired by no constancy of toil or length of life, but comes solely by the gift of nature and the happy star[2].

As member for the university of Cambridge, Sir Richard Jebb was succeeded by Samuel Henry Butcher, of Marlborough and Trinity, professor of Greek in the university of Edinburgh from 1882 to 1903, and ultimately president of the British Academy. Besides producing a compendious work on Demosthenes, and the earlier portion of a critical text of that orator, he took part in a memorable translation of the *Odyssey*, published a critical text and translation of Aristotle's treatise on poetry, and was the author of two volumes of suggestive and inspiring lectures on the genius and on the originality of Greece.

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[1] Verrall, A. W., in *Biographisches Jahrbuch*, Leipzig, 1906, p. 77.

[2] Jebb's *Bentley*, p. 210.

A masterly review of the great qualities of Sir Richard Jebb, as scholar and critic, and especially as editor of Sophocles, was written by Butcher's friend and contemporary, Arthur Woolgar Verrall, of Wellington and Trinity, who, in his own editions of plays of Aeschylus and Euripides, and in his essays on the latter poet, gave proof of a singular aptitude for verbal emendation, and of acute literary insight. Part of the too brief life of Walter Headlam, of Harrow and King's, was devoted to emending and translating Aeschylus, while his *Book of Greek Verse* gave ample evidence of his taste as an interpreter and an imitator of the Greek poets. A volume of admirable translations into Greek verse and prose was published by Richard Dacre Archer-Hind, of Shrewsbury and Trinity, who also produced excellent editions of the *Phaedo* and *Timaeus* of Plato. An elaborate commentary on the *Republic* was the most notable achievement of James Adam, of Aberdeen and of Caius and Emmanuel, whose Gifford lectures, entitled *The Religious Teachers of Greece*, were followed by a volume of collected papers under the title *The Vitality of Platonism, and other Essays.*

In the age succeeding that of Elmsley and Gaisford, Greek scholarship was well represented at Oxford by Henry George Liddell, dean of Christ Church, and Robert Scott, master of Balliol, joint authors of the standard Greek and English lexicon, first published in 1843. As master of Balliol, Scott was succeeded in 1870 by Benjamin Jowett, who, in 1855, had succeeded Gaisford as professor of Greek. His complete translation of Plato was achieved in 1871, and was followed by his translations of Thucydides, and of the *Politics* of Aristotle. All these three great works were justly recognised as masterpieces of English; the rendering of Plato in particular, with its admirable introductions, has done much towards popularising the study of that author in the English world. Jowett's contemporary, Mark Pattison, rector of Lincoln, is remembered by scholars as the author of *Isaac Casaubon*, and of essays on Scaliger. His younger contemporary, Richard Copley Christie, of Lincoln college, and for some years professor in Manchester, wrote a valuable life of *Étienne Dolet, the Martyr of the Renaissance.* By the side of Pattison and Jowett should be mentioned George Rawlinson, fellow of Exeter, who produced in 1858 a standard translation of Herodotus, with notes and essays, followed by a series of important volumes on the great oriental monarchies[1].

An excellent edition of the *Ethics* of Aristotle, with an English commentary and illustrative essays, was first published in 1857 by Sir Alexander Grant, fellow of Oriel; and two accurate editions of the *Politics* were simultaneously produced in 1854 by J. R. T. Eaton, of Merton, and Richard Congreve, of Wadham. As regius professor of Greek, Jowett was succeeded by Ingram Bywater, fellow of Exeter, who held that office from 1893 to his resignation in 1908. The most important of the works of this admirably accurate scholar was his commentary on the *Poetics.* His valuable collection of some of the choicest specimens of ancient and modern Greek literature was left to the Bodleian. Among Jowett's pupils at Balliol was William Gunion Rutherford, ultimately headmaster of Westminster school. He made his mark mainly by his *New Phrynichus,* which, under the guise of a commentary on the grammatical rules of the Atticists of the second century A.D., was really a comprehensive treatise on the characteristics of Attic Greek.

John Conington, afterwards better known as a Latin scholar, edited, in the early part of his career, the *Agamemnon* and *Choëphoroe* of Aeschylus, and afterwards completed the Spenserian rendering of the *Iliad* by Philip Stanhope Worsley, translator of the *Odyssey.* A good translation of the *Iliad* into blank verse was published in 1864 by the earl of Derby. Rather earlier, in 1858, William Ewart Gladstone produced *Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age,* the greater part of the results of which were summed up eleven years later in his *Juventus Mundi.* He also published, under the title *Homeric Synchronism,* 'an enquiry into the time and place of Homer,' besides producing a primer on Homer. The Homeric poems were the constant theme of the devoted labours of David Binning Monro, provost of Oriel for the last twenty-three years of his life. His *Grammar of the Homeric dialect,* published in 1882, was ultimately followed by his edition of the second half of the *Odyssey,* with important 'appendices,' including a masterly discussion of the history of the Homeric poems. The Homeric question was also ably discussed by John Stuart Blackie, professor of Greek in Edinburgh, and was more minutely studied by Sir William Duguid Geddes, professor of Greek at Aberdeen, who also produced an interesting edition of Plato's *Phaedo.*

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[1] On George Rawlinson, see pp. 316, 477; on Pattison, vol. XIV, pp. 109, 505; and on R. C. Christie, *ibid.* pp. 109, 501.

Among Latin scholars, mention may be made of Thomas Hewitt Key, of St John's and Trinity, Cambridge, professor of Latin at University college, London, from 1828 to 1842, and of comparative grammar from 1842 to 1875. His *Latin Grammar* was completed in 1846, while his *Latin Dictionary* was posthumously published from his unfinished manuscript in 1888. As professor of Latin, he was succeeded by George Long, who edited Cicero's *Orations* in 1851—8, and produced translations of thirteen of Plutarch's *Roman Lives,* and of the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius, and the *Manual* of Epictetus. His latest work was his *History of the Decline of the Roman Republic*[1]. Meanwhile, he had contributed numerous articles on Roman law and other subjects to the great series of dictionaries planned by William Smith, who was knighted in 1892, and who deserves to be remembered as a great organiser of learned literary labour. The dictionaries of Greek and Roman antiquities (1842, etc.), biography and mythology (1843, etc.) and geography (1857) were followed by dictionaries of the Bible and of Christian antiquities and Christian biography. The Latin and English dictionary of 1855, founded on Forcellini and Freund, has its counterpart in the English and Latin dictionary of 1870, compiled with the aid of Theophilus D. Hall and other scholars.

Among the Latinists of England, the foremost place is due to Hugh Andrew Johnstone Munro, of Shrewsbury and Trinity, whose masterly edition of Lucretius, with critical notes and a complete commentary, and a vigorous rendering in English prose, was first published in 1864. Five years later he contributed a revised text, and a critical introduction, to the edition of Horace, with illustrations from ancient gems selected by the learned archaeologist, Charles William King. His other works include an edition of the *Aetna* of an unknown poet, and *Criticisms and Elucidations of Catullus.* His *Translations into Latin and Greek Verse* are justly held in high esteem. A masculine vigour is the main characteristic of all his work—of his Latin verse compositions, not less than of his *Criticisms of Catullus,* and his translation of Lucretius.

The professorship of Latin vacated by Munro's resignation in

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[1] See *ante*, p. 307.

1872 was filled for the next twenty-eight years by John Eyton Bickersteth Mayor, of Shrewsbury and St John's, university librarian from 1864 to 1867. His *Juvenal* was first published in 1853. Not a few of the comprehensive notes in this work (especially in its later editions) are recognised as signally complete summaries of the literature of the subject concerned. The stamp of his profound learning is also impressed upon all his other works. Among those directly connected with classical scholarship may be mentioned his *First Greek Reader*, and his editions of Cicero's *Second Philippic*, and of the third book of Pliny's *Letters*. In 1863—9 he contributed to the *Rolls* series the two volumes of his learned edition of Richard of Cirencester. Nearly one hundred and fifty pages of the preface to the second volume are devoted to the examination of a work ascribed to Richard under the title *De Situ Britanniae*, proving it to be the work of 'a forger alike contemptible as penman, Latinist, historian, geographer, critic'; it was never mentioned until 1747, and its author was Charles Bertram, of Copenhagen. Mayor's activity, as editor and biographer, continued to the last, and extended into many paths of historical and antiquarian research[1]; while whatever he published was annotated with a minute and exhaustive erudition which is generally reserved for the leading representatives of classical literature.

Five years younger than Mayor was the scholar, educational reformer and legal writer, Henry John Roby, senior classic of 1853, fellow and ultimately honorary fellow of St John's, where he began his career as a college lecturer and a private tutor for the seven years between 1854 and 1861, making his first public appearance in 1858 as the author of a pamphlet on college reform. His brief experience as a master at Dulwich convinced him of the need for improvements in the Latin grammar then in vogue, and led to his producing in 1862 his *Elementary Latin Grammar*, which profoundly modified Kennedy's revised version of the authorised text-book. This was followed, ten years later, by the first of the five editions of his *Latin Grammar from Plautus to Suetonius*, in which the principles of phonetics and physiology were for the first time applied to the life and growth of the Latin language. Meanwhile, at the end of 1864, he had been appointed secretary to the Endowed Schools commission, and wrote two of the chief parts of its report. His experience in 1866—8 as professor of jurisprudence at University college, London, ultimately

[1] See bibliography.

bore fruit in 1884 in the two volumes of his *Introduction to Justinian's Digest,* and, again, in 1902, in the two volumes entitled *Roman Private Law in the Times of Cicero and the Antonines,* and in his *Essays on the Law of Cicero's Private Orations.* He was member for the Eccles division of Lancashire from 1890 to 1895, when he left Manchester and settled at Grasmere for the last twenty years of his life. A standard edition of Cicero, *De Oratore,* was prepared for the Oxford press by Augustus Samuel Wilkins, of St John's college, Cambridge, for many years professor of Latin and comparative philology in Manchester. He also edited Cicero's *Speeches against Catiline,* and Horace's *Epistles,* besides taking part in the translation of George Curtius's *Principles of Greek Etymology,* and of his work entitled *The Greek Verb.*

The first professor of Latin at Oxford was John Conington, who was elected in 1854 and held the professorship for the last fifteen of the forty-four years of his life. He is widely known as the editor and translator of Virgil and Persius. His translation of Horace into English verse was regarded by Munro as 'on the whole perhaps the best and most successful translation of a Classic that exists in the English language.' Edwin Palmer filled the Latin chair from 1870 to 1878. Palmer's successor, Henry Nettleship, planned a great Latin dictionary, and published a tenth part of the proposed work under the title *Contributions to Latin Lexicography.* He was an able critic of the ancient Latin poets and grammarians, and many of his best papers have been collected in the two volumes of his *Essays.* In 1893 he was succeeded by Robinson Ellis, best known as the learned editor of Catullus. His metrical version of that author has many touches of true poetry. He was also known as the editor of Velleius Paterculus, Avianus and Orientius, of the *Ibis* and the *Aetna* and of the *Appendix Vergiliana.* An unswerving and unselfish love of Latin learning, for its own sake, was the leading characteristic of his work from first to last.

Meanwhile, in Scotland, the professorship of humanity in Edinburgh was held by Conington's contemporary, a fellow of Oriel, William Young Sellar. Immediately before his appointment in 1863, he produced, in his *Roman Poets of the Republic,* a masterpiece of literary criticism, which was followed in due time by similar works on Virgil, and on Horace and the elegiac poets.

Among Latin scholars in Ireland, mention should be made of Henry Ellis Allen, who, between 1836 and 1856, produced able critical editions of Cicero's philosophical works; and of James Henry, whose *Aeneidea*, of 1873 to 1889, includes many important contributions to the interpretation of the poet's text. In the next generation, textual criticism was the forte of Arthur Palmer, professor of Latin at Trinity college, Dublin, who was specially interested in the criticism of the elegiac poets and of Plautus. His contemporary, Robert Yelverton Tyrrell, who may fitly be described as *doctus sermones utriusque linguae*, edited the *Bacchae* of Euripides during his tenure of the professorship of Latin, and the *Miles Gloriosus* of Plautus on his promotion to the professorship of Greek. In 1879, he undertook an extensive commentary on the correspondence of Cicero, which, with the learned aid of Louis Claude Purser, he brought to a successful conclusion in 1900. He also published a critical text of Sophocles. His devotion to ancient and modern drama was combined with a keen wit and a felicitous style; and his appreciation of great writers was enhanced by his own delight in literary form.

CLASSICAL ARCHAEOLOGISTS

An interest in classical archaeology was fostered by the foundation of the society of Dilettanti at the close of 1733. The society produced a splendid series of archaeological publications, including Richard Chandler's *Antiquities of Ionia* (1769 and 1797)[1]. Learned travel was also represented by Edward Dodwell's *Classical and Topographical Tour through Greece* (1819), and by his work on Cyclopian remains in Italy and Greece (1834); also by Sir William Gell's works on Troy and Ithaca, his itineraries of Greece and the Morea, and his *Pompeiana* (1817—32).

One of the foremost of the Greek topographers of the nineteenth century was William Martin Leake, who, on retiring from active military service in 1815, devoted all his energies to the cause of classical learning. In his *Researches in Greece* (1814) he gives an elementary grammar of modern Greek, with a list of neo-Hellenic authors. This was followed by an important work entitled *The Topography of Athens*, and by *Travels in Asia Minor, in the Morea*, and *in Northern Greece*. In his *Numismata Hellenica* he described his great collection of Greek coins, which was afterwards acquired by the university of Cambridge.

The geographical and historical elucidation of Thucydides was largely promoted by Thomas Arnold's edition of 1830—5, whose

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[1] See further in bibliography, II.

History of Rome is noticed in another chapter[1], where reference is also made to the chronological researches of Henry Fynes Clinton, of Christ Church, Oxford, the learned author of *Fasti Hellenici* and *Fasti Romani.* His younger contemporary William Mure travelled in Greece in 1838, and, in his *Critical History of the Literature of Antient Greece*, showed a special interest in Xenophon. *An Enquiry into the Credibility of Early Roman History* was published in 1855 by Sir George Cornewall Lewis, who also translated Boeckh's *Public Economy of Athens*, edited Babrius and wrote on *The Astronomy of the Ancients.*

Lycia was traversed in 1838 and 1840 by Charles Fellows, the discoverer of the Xanthian marbles, and, in 1842, by Thomas Abel Brimage Spratt and Edward Forbes. Nineveh was excavated in 1845 by (Sir) Austen Henry Layard. Crete was explored in 1851—3 by Spratt, and, more than half a century later, by (Sir) Arthur Evans, whose investigations, in and after 1893, resulted in the discovery of the pre-Phoenician script, and, finally (in 1900—8), in the excavation of the prehistoric palace of Cnossos. The necropolis of Cameiros in Rhodes was excavated by Salzmann and Biliotti in 1858 and 1865; Cyrene was explored in 1860—1 by (Sir) Robert Murdoch Smith and E. A. Porcher; the antiquities of Egypt were investigated by the aid of the Egypt Exploration Fund, and also by that of the Research Account founded by William Matthew Flinders Petrie in 1894, and enlarged as the British School of Archaeology in Egypt in 1905.

Charles Thomas Newton, of Shrewsbury and of Christ Church, began in 1840 the long series of services to the British Museum which ended in 1885, when he completed the twenty-four years of his tenure of the office of keeper of Greek and Roman antiquities. That appointment marked the dawn of a true interest in classical archaeology in England. Newton's name had already been associated with the recovery of the remains of the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus in 1856. In 1880 he published a collected edition of his *Essays in Art and Archaeology*, including an excellent paper on Greek inscriptions. He was among the first to welcome the opening of the museums of classical archaeology at Cambridge and Oxford. At the inaugural ceremony at Cambridge in 1884 the cast of the figure of Proserpine, which he had himself discovered at Cnidos, prompted him to describe the occasion as 'the ἄνοδος of archaeology, so long buried in England.'

In the study of Greek architecture an eminent position was attained by Newton's contemporary, Francis Cranmer Penrose, who, as 'travelling bachelor of the university of Cambridge,' studied architecture in Rome and in Athens, where he was led by the theories of Pennethorne to determine the hyperbolic curve of the *entasis* of the columns of the Parthenon. The results were published in his *Principles of Athenian Architecture* in 1851[1]. The study of classical archaeology has been fostered in England by the foundation of the societies for the Promotion of Hellenic and Roman Studies in 1879 and 1911, and by the institution of the British Schools of Archaeology at Athens (of which Penrose was the first director) in 1886 and at Rome in 1901.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 303.

Fragments of Epicurus and Philodemus, discovered at Herculaneum in 1752, were published at Oxford in 1824 and 1891. Many remnants of Greek literature have been recovered from the sands of Egypt. Three of the speeches of the Attic orator, Hyperides, were discovered in 1847, and his *Funeral Oration* in 1856. Part of another oration was found in the series acquired by the British Museum in 1890, which also included Aristotle's *Constitution of Athens*, and the *Mimes* of Herodas, followed in 1896—7 by the *Odes* of Bacchylides. Among the literary *papyri* since published by the Graeco-Roman branch of the Egypt Exploration Fund have been the *Paeans* and *Partheneia* of Pindar, a large part of a satyric drama of Sophocles and numerous fragments of the Greek Bible.

Among English editors of the Greek Testament, Christopher Wordsworth, afterwards bishop of Lincoln, published in 1856—9 a commentary on the Greek Testament which teems with citations from patristic literature. The German commentators are more fully noticed in the edition produced by Henry Alford, dean of Canterbury. Several of the Pauline epistles were elaborately edited by Charles John Ellicott, afterwards bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, and, with a higher degree of success, by Joseph Barber Lightfoot, bishop of Durham, who was also the editor of Clement of Rome, and of Ignatius and Polycarp. Critical texts of the Greek Testament were produced by Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, by Frederick Henry Scrivener, and, in 1881, by Brooke Foss Westcott, afterwards bishop of Durham, and Fenton John Anthony Hort. Of these last, the former published commentaries on the Gospel and the epistles of St John, and on the epistle to the Hebrews. English and American scholars joined in the revision of the

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[1] For other works on classical archaeology see bibliography.

Authorised Version of the New Testament from June 1870 to November 1880.

ORIENTAL SCHOLARS

The Cambridge Hebraists of the nineteenth century include the names of Samuel Lee, professor of Hebrew and Arabic; William Hodge Mill, who is better known as a theologian; Frederick Field, whose edition of Origen's *Hexapla* placed him in the front rank of Hebrew and Syriac scholars; Peter Hamnett Mason, of St John's, author of a Hebrew grammar and a rabbinical reader; and Charles Taylor, master of St John's, editor of the Hebrew *Sayings of the Fathers.* William Aldis Wright, besides editing a commentary on the book of Job from a MS in the Cambridge library, was secretary of the Old Testament revision company from 1870 to 1885. At Oxford, the professorship of Hebrew was held for fifty-four years by Edward Bouverie Pusey[1], author of *A Commentary on the Minor Prophets* and of *Lectures on the Prophet Daniel*; and, for thirty years, by Samuel Rolles Driver, author of *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, and of commentaries on many parts of it, as well as joint author of a Hebrew-English lexicon. In Edinburgh, Andrew Bruce Davidson prepared a Hebrew grammar and syntax, and commentaries on the book of Job, and on several of the prophets.

Meanwhile, in London, Christian David Ginsburg had, among his many important works, produced translations of *The Song of Songs* and of *Ecclesiastes*, and had published the Massorah, a 'Masoretico-critical' edition of the Hebrew Bible, with an introduction, and *Facsimiles of MSS of the Hebrew Bible.*

William Cureton, of Christ Church, published a Syriac MS of *The Epistles of St Ignatius* in 1845—9, the Syriac version of *The Festal Letters of Athanasius*, and remains of the Syriac Gospels from a MS of the fifth century; Robert Payne Smith, dean of Canterbury, began, in 1868, the publication of an important Syriac lexicon; and Robert Lubbock Bensly, fellow of Gonville and Caius, who was the first to publish, in 1875, from an Amiens MS of the ninth century, the missing fragment of the Latin translation of the fourth book of Ezra, spent the last year of his life in deciphering the Syriac MS of the Gospels discovered in 1892 at St Catharine's, on mount Sinai. Bensly's discovery of the fragment of the fourth book of Ezra had been anticipated, in 1826, by John Palmer, fellow of St John's, professor of Arabic from 1804 to 1840, whose discovery was not published until 1877.

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[1] Cf. *ante*, pp. 262—3.

Arabic was ably represented in the nineteenth century by Edward William Lane, author of the great Arabic lexicon, and translator of *The Arabian Nights*; by William Wright, professor of Arabic in Cambridge from 1870 to 1889, author of an excellent Arabic grammar, and a distinguished Syriac scholar; and by Edward Henry Palmer, lord almoner's reader in Cambridge, who showed the highest genius for the acquisition of oriental languages, travelled in the 'Desert of the Exodus' in 1868—9, and finally died in Arabia in the service of his country during the rebellion of Arabi in 1882. His successor in the readership, William Robertson Smith, a scholar of singular versatility, besides studying physics with distinction in Aberdeen, and becoming prominent as an advanced theologian, devoted himself to oriental languages, and was appointed librarian of the university of Cambridge, and, subsequently, professor of Arabic.

In Turkish, one of the leading authorities was Sir James William Redhouse, author of a grammar and dictionary of the Ottoman language. Turkish, Arabic and Persian were successfully studied by Elias John Wilkinson Gibb, author of a *History of Ottoman Poetry*; and Persian, many years previously, by Sir William Ouseley, and by his younger brother, Sir Gore Ouseley. The cuneiform inscriptions of Persia, Assyria and Babylonia were deciphered between 1837 and 1851 by Sir Henry Creswicke Rawlinson, and, in 1849, by Edward Hincks, fellow of Trinity college, Dublin. In 1876, all the inscriptions relating to the Creation, which had been found in Assyria by George Smith, of the British Museum, were published in his *Chaldaean Genesis*.

Among English Egyptologists special mention is due to Sir John Gardner Wilkinson, whose admirable *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, first published in 1837, attained its final form in 1878. Samuel Birch, of the British Museum, produced, in 1867, an *Hieroglyphical Grammar and Dictionary*, and a translation of *The Book of the Dead*, and, in 1858, a *History of Ancient Pottery*, a new and revised edition of which appeared in 1873.

Among Chinese scholars, the most eminent have been the three missionaries—Robert Morrison, author of the first Chinese-English dictionary (1815—23), who translated the Bible with the cooperation of William Milne; Walter Henry Medhurst, translator of the Bible, and author of an English-Japanese, as well as a Chinese-English and English-Chinese, dictionary; and James Legge, translator of some Taoist classics, and of the whole of the Confucian canon. The last of these scholars was the first holder of the chair of Chinese founded at Oxford in 1875, while at Cambridge an honorary professorship of that language was held until 1895 by Sir Thomas Francis Wade, who presented to the university his valuable library of Chinese literature.

The first Englishman who worked at Sanskrit to any purpose was Sir Charles Wilkins. He began his study of the language in India in 1778, encouraged by Warren Hastings, and, besides translating the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Hitopadesa*, produced a Sanskrit grammar in 1808. In 1786 (as we have already seen[1]) Sir William Jones had pointed out the affinity of Sanskrit with Greek, Latin, Gothic and Celtic, and, in 1789, its connection with Zend. Burnouf and Friedrich Schlegel learnt their Sanskrit from an Indian civilian, Alexander Hamilton, who was captured by Napoleon in 1802, and detained until 1807, and was thereby enabled to excite the first interest in that language in France and Germany. William Carey, the baptist missionary, published a Sanskrit grammar in 1806, edited and translated the *Rāmāyana* and translated the Bible into Sanskrit. Henry Thomas Colebrooke produced elaborate renderings of two treatises on the law of inheritance, and of certain mathematical and philosophical works, while his collected *Essays on Sanskrit literature* (1837) are recognised as masterpieces of research. The study of the language was specially promoted by Horace Hayman Wilson, the first professor of Sanskrit at Oxford (1833), whose dictionary of 1819 and 1832 made the further study of the language possible in Europe. In 1860 he was succeeded in the chair by (Sir Monier) Monier Williams, who completed his Sanskrit-English dictionary in 1872, and brought about the foundation of the Indian Institute in 1883. Meanwhile, Friedrich Max Müller, who had settled at Oxford in 1848, and had published an edition of *The Rigveda* in 1849—73, gave two admirable courses of *Lectures on the Science of Languages* at the Royal Institution in 1861—4, which led to his appointment as professor of comparative philology at Oxford in 1868. In and after 1875, he edited the important series known as *The Sacred Books of the East.* From 1867 to 1903, Edward Byles Cowell of Magdalen hall, Oxford, president of the Sanskrit college, Calcutta, was the first holder of the professorship of Sanskrit at Cambridge, and, with the aid of his pupils, issued an important series of Sanskrit texts and translations.

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[1] *Ante*, p. 327.

ENGLISH SCHOLARS

The dictionary of Anglo-Saxon, begun by Edward Lye, was completed by Owen Manning in 1776. The next landmark in the literature of the subject was the publication of Sharon Turner's *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, in 1799—1805[1]. Benjamin Thorpe, who studied at Copenhagen under Rask, published Rask's *Anglo-Saxon Grammar* in English in 1830, translated Caedmon in 1832 and Beowulf in 1855, and edited *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* in 1861; while John Mitchell Kemble, of Trinity college, Cambridge, a friend and pupil of Jacob Grimm, edited Beowulf in 1833, and the *Codex Diplomaticus Aevi Saxonici*, in six volumes, in 1839—48, founding on this great collection of charters his important work entitled *The Saxons in England* (1849)[2]. Richard Morris, in his *Specimens of Early English* (1867), distinguished the chief characteristics of the three main dialects of middle English, the northern, midland and southern. Joseph Bosworth, of Trinity college, Cambridge, after publishing his elementary grammar in 1823 and his larger dictionary in 1838, filled the chair of Anglo-Saxon at Oxford from 1858 to 1876, and, by a gift dating from 1867, brought about the foundation of the Elrington and Bosworth professorship at Cambridge eleven years later. The professorship was held from 1878 to 1912 by Walter William Skeat, fellow of Christ's college, the unwearied editor of many English classics, including *Piers Plowman*, Barbour's *Bruce* and Chaucer, and author of *An Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*[3]. The publications of the Early English Text society and the Scottish Text society concern language rather than literature; and in this connection we may also mention those of the Philological society and the English Dialect society. Celtic studies have made much progress, not only in Ireland, but also in Scotland and in Wales.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ANTIQUARIES

Richard Gough, the first of the English antiquaries to be noticed in this chapter, devoted his whole life to antiquarian research. He had inherited a large fortune, and, even in his undergraduate days at Corpus Christi college, Cambridge, was already beginning *Anecdotes of British Topography*, which he published in 1768 and enlarged in 1780. He was the author of the 'History of the Society of Antiquaries' prefixed to their *Archaeologia.* He also produced in 1789 an expanded edition of the English translation of Camden's *Britannia.* Moreover, in 1786, he had begun *Sepulchral Monuments of Great Britain,* which he completed in 1799. The second volume of this was hailed by Horace Walpole as 'the most splendid work' he had ever seen. Gough's *Anecdotes of British Topography* was continued in the ten volumes of John Nichols's *Bibliotheca Topographica* (1780—1800), whose most important work was *The History and Antiquities of the Town and County of Leicester,* published from 1795 to 1815. He also supplied the elaborate index to Bowyer's *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century,* while the work entitled *Illustrations of the Literary History* of that century, begun by John Nichols, was completed by his son, John Bowyer, and his grandson, John Gough Nichols[1].

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[1] Cf. vol. XIV.

[2] Cf. *ibid.*

[3] For Shakespearean scholars, see *ante*, vol. v, pp. 277—280, and bibliography to chaps. VIII—XII. For Furnivall, see also, p. 504 *infra*.

Three volumes of *The Beauties of Wiltshire,* five of *The Architectural Antiquities of Great Britain,* and six of *The Cathedral Antiquities,* with single volumes on 'Picturesque Antiquities of English Cities,' on St Mary Redcliffe church, Bristol, on Fonthill abbey, and on Windsor castle, form a large part of the works of John Britton, a native of Wiltshire. It was said of him that 'his elegantly-illustrated works have been a chief exciting cause in bringing about the improved state of public feeling with reference to our national antiquities.'[2] In conjunction with Edward Wedlake Brayley he edited, in 1801—14, nine volumes of *The Beauties of England and Wales.* Daniel Lysons, in conjunction with his brother, Samuel, began, under the title *Magna Britannia,* an account of Great Britain, dealing with the first ten counties in alphabetical order from Bedfordshire to Devonshire (1806—22). The volumes were welcomed, in *The Gentleman's Magazine,* as 'a rich museum of valuable curiosities.' The topographical collections for the remainder of the great work are preserved in sixty-four volumes among the manuscripts of the British Museum (*Additional MSS,* 9408—71). The principal separate work of Daniel Lysons was *The Environs of London,* while his brother is best known by his *Reliquiae Britannico-Romanae.*

A large amount of valuable work was accomplished by Thomas Dunham Whitaker, of St John's college, Cambridge. His publications included, with other works on the topography of northern England, a *History of Richmondshire.* This important work was completed in two folio volumes in 1823, with thirty-two plates by Turner. Its merits and defects are thus summed up in *The Retrospective Review*[1]:

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[1] Nichols's *Literary Anecdotes,* vol. VI, pp. 262—343.

[2] Life of Britton in Knight's *English Cyclopaedia.* For his other works, see bibliography.

> No work of County History has hitherto issued from the press (not excepting even Sir Richard Hoare's magnificent *Wiltshire*) so splendid, in respect both of typography and graphic illustration, as Dr Whitaker's *Richmond*; and yet, with all the author's high reputation and acknowledged talent, few (we believe) have fallen so far short of the expectations formed by readers of real science and desirous of substantial information, principally in those very points in which we have represented Mr Baker as far excelling.

The work of George Baker, extolled in the above passage, is his *History and Antiquities of Northamptonshire,* published in five parts between 1822 and 1841, and then abandoned from lack of adequate support. A history of Hallamshire, published in 1819, and enlarged fifty years later, was produced by Joseph Hunter, the historian of *South Yorkshire* (1828—31). Other counties have their 'histories.' They may be described as works of various degrees of merit; but it is hardly necessary to enumerate them, especially as they are in process of being absorbed and superseded by *The Victoria County Histories.* There are also special bibliographies of the literature of several of the counties: *e.g.* Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Lancashire, Norfolk and Shropshire.

The foundation of the study of English folklore was laid by *The Antiquities of the Common People,* first published at Newcastle by Henry Bourne in 1725, and re-issued in an expanded form by John Brand in 1777. In 1813, 1843 and 1849 it was greatly enlarged by Sir Henry Ellis, principal librarian of the British Museum, who published *An Introduction to Domesday Book,* and eleven volumes of *Original Letters, illustrative of English History,* with notes and illustrations (1824—48), and also prepared a new edition of Dugdale's *Monasticon Anglicanum.*

The Roman antiquities of Caerleon were repeatedly described by John Edward Lee, author of *Imperial Profiles,* enlarged from Roman coins (1874). The Roman wall was the theme of an admirable hand-book by John Collingwood Bruce, that reached a seventh edition in 1914. Bruce was also editor of *Lapidarium Septentrionale,* a volume illustrated by nearly a thousand woodcuts and maps and describing the monuments of Roman rule in the north of England (1875). The 'Antiquarian Notes' in

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[1] Vol. IX (1824), p. 223.

The Gentleman's Magazine were edited for many years by Charles Roach Smith, who wrote on the antiquities of Richborough, Reculver, Lymne and Faversham, in Kent, and also on Roman London. The ancient remains collected by him during a course of twenty years were purchased for the British Museum. He also wrote on the birthplace and the rural life of Shakespeare, as illustrated by his works; in conjunction with Thomas Wright, he founded the British Archaeological association in 1843; and, in 1883, he published in his *Retrospections* a review of the researches of English antiquaries during the past forty years. Among the many antiquarian publications of Thomas Wright[1] was an account of the excavations of Wroxeter (1872). William Thompson Watkin devoted special attention to the Roman antiquities of England and Wales. His *Roman Lancashire* (1882) takes rank with the best local histories of the Roman occupation of Britain, and is even surpassed by his later work entitled *Roman Cheshire* (1886). An admirably illustrated work entitled *Romano-British Mosaic Pavements* was published by Thomas Morgan in 1886.

A work on the archaeology of the northern nations, under the title *Horae Ferales*, which had been left unfinished by John Mitchell Kemble, was edited in 1863 by (Sir) Augustus Wollaston Franks, of Trinity college, Cambridge, ultimately keeper of mediaeval antiquities in the British Museum, who wrote numerous memoirs on archaeological subjects, besides drawing up the catalogue of his own priceless collection of porcelain.

The many-sided antiquary Sir John Evans, who was successively president of the Geological, Numismatic and Antiquarian societies, and contributed largely to their *Transactions*, is best remembered as the author of three important works, each of them a masterpiece in its special department of study: (1) *The Coins of the Ancient Britons* (1864); (2) *The Ancient Stone Implements, Weapons, and Ornaments of Great Britain* (1872); and (3) *The Ancient Bronze Implements, Weapons, and Ornaments of Great Britain and Ireland* (1881). The second of these was welcomed as 'an admirable summary of the facts and the deductions as to...the relative antiquity of these rude relics of the earliest inhabitants'[2]; and the third, as 'a rich repertory of facts...skilfully marshalled in such fashion as to form an organised body.'[3]

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[1] See *post*, p. 353.

[2] *The Academy*, vol. VI, p. 159.

[3] *Ibid.* vol. XX, p. 33.

Under the title *Textrinum Antiquum*, 'an account of the art of weaving among the ancients' was produced in 1843 by James Yates, a unitarian minister, whose work was welcomed as 'worthy of the best days of critical antiquarianism,' and as 'deserving to rank with the works of the Graevii and the Gronovii of past ages.'[1] A *History of British Costumes*, the result of ten years' study, had meanwhile been published by a versatile writer, James Robinson Planché. *Primeval History* (1846), and *Ancient Egypt* (1850) and *Phoenicia* (1857), were among the earlier productions of one who has been regarded as the greatest scholar among the unitarians, John Kenrick[2].

With a view to the reconstruction of the past, ancient remains and the manners and customs of modern savages were studied in *Prehistoric Times* (1865) by Sir John Lubbock (afterwards Lord Avebury), who also wrote *The Origin of Civilization, and the Primitive Condition of Man* (1870). The same subjects were treated from a different point of view, and with different results, by John Ferguson MacLennan, author of *Primitive Marriage*. In 1883, under the influence of Sir Henry Maine's *Ancient Law* and *Village Communities*, *The English Village Community* 'in its relations to the manorial and tribal systems, and to the common or open field system of husbandry' was published by Frederic Seebohm, who subsequently produced *The Tribal System of Wales*[3]. The *British Barrows* of canon Greenwell, of Durham, (1877) supplied a very full and accurate record of the examination of sepulchral mounds in various parts of England. Ten years later, the same author published an important monograph, *The electrum coinage of Cyzicus*. George William Kitchin, dean of Durham, author of a *History of France*, wrote on Winchester, and on the great screen of its cathedral; and a *History of the Cathedral Church of Wells* was written in 1870 by Edward Augustus Freeman. *The Architectural History of the University and Colleges of Cambridge*, together with that of Eton college, begun by Robert Willis, was continued and brought to a successful conclusion by John Willis Clark, registrary of the university from 1891 to his death in 1910, who also deserves to be remembered for his work on Barnwell priory, and for his fine volume on the history of libraries entitled *The Care of Books*. In 1872 Mackenzie Edward Charles Walcott had published

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[1] *The Literary Gazette*, 1844, p. 89. [2] As to his other publications, see bibliography.

[3] On Sir Henry Maine, see vol. XIV, pp. 36, 78, 494; and on Seebohm, *ibid.* pp. 78 ff., 497.

Traditions and Customs of Cathedrals, followed in 1874 by *A History of the Cathedrals, Conventual Foundations, Collegiate Churches, and Hospitals of Scotland.* The latter work was said to have largely supplied what Scotland had long needed, 'a Dodsworth, a Dugdale, a Ware, or an Archdall, who should employ his leisure in the preparation of her *Monasticon*'[1]. *A Survey of London*, intended to do for modern London what Stow had done for the Elizabethan city, was unfortunately left unfinished by Sir Walter Besant, whose keen interest in the subject was, however, partly proved by his completed works, *London* (1892), *Westminster* (1895) and *South London* (1899).

George Thomas Clark, a founder of the Archaeological association (now the Royal Archaeological institute), propounded, in his *Mediaeval Military Architecture in England* (1884), the theory that the castle of Norman times was identical with the *burh* of the *Old English Chronicle*; but this theory has been, practically, overthrown by later authorities. Other important works on the same general subject were *The Castles of England, their Story and Structure*, by Sir James Dixon Mackenzie (1897), and the unfinished *Border Holds of Northumberland* by Cadwallader John Bates[2].

The antiquities of Scotland, as well as those of England and Wales, were explored by Francis Grose, an excellent draughtsman and accomplished scholar of Swiss origin, whose work, *The Antiquities of England and Wales*, begun in 1777, was completed ten years later. Two years after its completion, he set out for Scotland, where he met Robert Burns, and was immortalised by him in the famous song beginning 'Ken ye ought o' Captain Grose,' while, in another poem, 'Hear, land o' Cakes, and brither Scots,' he playfully warned all Scotsmen of this chield amang them, taking notes. The two volumes of Grose's *Antiquities of Scotland* were completed in 1791, which was also the year of his death, and of the publication of his posthumous work, *The Antiquities of Ireland.* Captain Grose, who has been aptly described as 'a sort of antiquarian Falstaff,' is further known as the author of a treatise entitled *Ancient Armour and Weapons*, and of two volumes on military antiquities. The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland was founded in Edinburgh in 1780, at a time when captain Grose was still engaged on *The Antiquities of England and Wales.*

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[1] *The Athenaeum*, no. 2444.

[2] See the bibliography on pp. xiii—xxi of A. Hamilton Thompson's *Military Architecture during the Middle Ages* (1912).

A comprehensive topographical and historical account of Scotland was published in 1807—24 in the *Caledonia* of George Chalmers, who devoted a large part of his life to this stupendous work, which, unhappily, remained unfinished. The author has been described by Dibdin as 'the Atlas of Scottish Antiquaries and Historians; bearing on his shoulders whatever has been collected, and with pain *separately* endured by his predecessors'; one 'whom neither difficulties tire, nor dangers daunt.' During his previous migration to Maryland, he had made a collection of 'Treaties' and of 'Political Annals of the... Colonies.' After his return to Scotland, he wrote lives of Ruddiman, Sir David Lyndsay and Mary queen of Scots. The Scottish section of his library has been described as 'one of the most valuable collections of works on the history and literature of Scotland ever formed by a private individual.'[1] In the next generation, Sir John Graham Dalyell, author of *The Darker Superstitions of Scotland* (1834), gave proof of being a remarkably versatile antiquary. James Logan was a man of some note as the author of *The Scottish Gael, or Celtic Manners as preserved amongst the Highlanders* (1831), and also of the two illustrated folios on the *Clans of the Scottish Highlands* (1843—9), regarded in their day as 'one of the most valuable and interesting works of modern times.' Robert Stuart, the bookseller and antiquary of Glasgow, produced, in his *Caledonia Romana* of 1845, 'a descriptive account of the Roman antiquities of Scotland.' John Stuart, of Edinburgh, published, in 1856, *The Sculptured Stones of Scotland*, besides editing, in 1869, *The Book of Deer*, and preparing for publication, in 1872, *Archaeological Essays* by the eminent physician, Sir James Young Simpson.

Contributions to Scottish Ethnology was the title of the first important work of John Beddoe, who was born in Worcestershire in 1826, and educated in the universities of London and Edinburgh, and was president of the Anthropological society in 1869—70. He subsequently wrote *The Races of Britain* (1885), and *The*

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[1] Cf. David Murray's *David Laing*, p. 33. *The Antiquary* was given to the world by 'the author of Waverley' in 1815. The character of the whimsical virtuoso, Jonathan Oldbuck of Monkbarns, was partly founded on that of an old friend of Scott's youth, George Constable, of Wallace Craigie, near Dundee, while the scene in which Edie Ochiltree interrupts the antiquary's ecstatic description of the *Praetorium* of Agrippa by exclaiming, 'Praetorian here, Praetorian there, I mind the bigging o't,' is an echo of an incident that actually happened to an antiquary of great learning and acuteness, Sir John Clerk, of Penicuik, one of the barons of the Scottish court of exchequer, when he conducted the English antiquary, Roger Gale, to the Roman station of Birrenswark, in Dumfriesshire.

Anthropological History of Europe (1891). *The Archaeology and Prehistoric Annals of Scotland*, published in 1851 by (Sir) Daniel Wilson, afterwards president of the university of Toronto, formed an epoch in the study of the earlier antiquities of Scotland, and invested antiquities with all the charms of graceful literature[1]. Sir Daniel was also the author of 'Researches into the origin of civilisation in the Old and the New World,' published under the title *Prehistoric Man*, a work teeming with interesting matter clothed in a clear and graphic style. The Rhind lectures in archaeology were founded by Alexander Henry Rhind, who made a special study of Scottish antiquities, and, during a visit to Egypt for the benefit of his health, collected the materials for a work entitled *Thebes, its Tombs and their Tenants* (1862).

In Irish archaeology, the first name of permanent importance is that of George Petrie. In 1833 he was appointed to superintend the historical and antiquarian sections of the ordnance survey of Ireland. It was originally proposed to add to the maps of each district a memoir on its past history and its ancient monuments, but, after one volume of the proposed series had been issued, the work was suddenly dropped on the alleged ground of expense. Petrie's three chief essays were the outcome of his work on the survey. In his prize-essay, *The Round Towers of Ireland* (1833), he dispelled the theory of their pagan origin by proving that they were Christian belfries; and this essay was expanded into his great work, *The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland* (1845). His second essay, *Antiquities of Tara* (1843), was originally intended for the ordnance memoir on Meath. The manuscript of the third, *Irish Military Architecture*, still remains among the archives of the Royal Irish academy. As a landscape painter, he had been attracted by the surpassing interest of Irish antiquities. He traversed the whole country 'in search of subjects for his canvas, and, at the same time, made copious notes and sketches of buildings,' besides collecting antiquities, and reaping 'a vast harvest of traditional music.'[2] Petrie, on joining the Irish academy, arranged the small series of weapons and implements presented by the king of Denmark. After his death, his own collection was added, and, in 1857—62, all the antiquarian acquisitions of the academy were described in an amply illustrated catalogue by the distinguished physician, Sir William Wilde, who thus provided 'the quarry from which all later writers on Irish antiquities draw their materials.'[1] The Royal Irish academy had grown from a society established in Dublin about 1782. The Kilkenny Archaeological society, founded in 1849, became, in 1869, the 'Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland,' and, in 1890, the 'Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland.'

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[1] *The Westminster Review*, April 1856, p. 384.

[2] Macalister, R. A. S., in *The Journal of the Ivernian Society*, vol. v (1912), p. 30

Turning from Ireland to India, we note that the Asiatic society of Bengal was founded by Sir William Jones in 1784, and that, in 1811, the eminent Sanskrit scholar, Horace Hayman Wilson, was appointed secretary of that body. Wilson was also an original member of the Royal Asiatic society, and director of it from 1837 to his death in 1860. Most of his works were specially connected with the Sanskrit language and literature[2]; but he was also an Indian antiquary. His *Ariana Antiqua* (1841) is 'a Descriptive Account of the Antiquities and Coins of Afghanistan,' including a chapter on 'the progress of discovery' of Indian monuments, and a 'Memoir on the Topes' by Charles Masson, the traveller in Balochistan. James Tod, who lived in India from 1800 to 1823, published *The Antiquities of Rajpootana*, ranked by cardinal Wiseman 'among the most valuable, as well as among the most beautiful works upon Eastern literature.'

As secretary of the Asiatic society of Bengal, Wilson was succeeded, in 1832, by James Prinsep, who, as an assay-master in northern India, collected the materials for his earliest work, his *Benares illustrated* (1831). He also paid special attention to the deciphering of inscriptions.

The Kharoṣṭhi alphabet, written from right to left, ceased to be used in India in the third century of our era; while the Brāhmī, written from left to right, is the source of all later Indian alphabets. A collection of Prinsep's *Essays on Indian Antiquities*, bearing on these and on cognate topics, was published by Edward Thomas in 1858. Edwin Norris, in a paper on 'the Kapur-di-Giri rock-inscription' (1845), pointed out the method of deciphering an alphabet, which had been previously unknown, thus making, in the words of H. H. Wilson, 'an unexpected and interesting accession to our knowledge of the palaeography and ancient history of India.'[3] The office of director-general of the archaeological survey of India was ably filled from 1870 to 1885 by major-general Sir Alexander Cunningham, who had made his mark in antiquarian literature by his *Essay on the*

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[1] Macalister, R. A. S., *l.c.* vol. v (1913), p. 85.

[2] Cf. *ante*, p. 343.

[3] *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1845.

Architecture of the Temples of Kashmir (1848), followed by *The Bhilsa Topes, or Buddhist Monuments of Central India* (1854). He also wrote *The Ancient Geography of India* (1871), and published an important *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum* (1879).

James Fergusson, who went to India in 1829 as an indigo-planter, settled in London in 1839, and devoted himself to archaeological research. The author of the well-known *Illustrated Hand-book of Architecture*, which deals with the styles of all ages and countries, was led by his early life in India to take a special interest in its ancient architecture and its religious institutions. Such was the origin of his *Rock-cut Temples of India* (1864), his *Tree and Serpent Worship*, with its illustrations from the sculptures of Buddhist topes (1863 and 1873), and his joint work *The Cave Temples of India* (1880).

The coins of ancient India were investigated by H. H. Wilson, in his *Ariana Antiqua*; by James Prinsep in his *Essays*; by Edward Thomas in his *Ancient Indian Weights*; and by Sir Alexander Cunningham, who also made a special study of the coinage of the Hindu states of medieval India[1].

LITERARY ANTIQUARIES

'A literary antiquary' has been described by Isaac D'Israeli as 'that idler whose life is passed in a perpetual *voyage autour de ma chambre*; fervent in sagacious diligence, instinct with the enthusiasm of curious inquiry, critical as well as erudite; he has to arbitrate between contending opinions, to resolve the doubtful, to clear up the obscure, and to grasp at the remote; so busied with other times, and so interested for other persons than those about him, that he becomes the inhabitant of the visionary world of books.'[2]

One of the foremost places among the literary and historical antiquaries of England is due to Thomas Wright, of Trinity college, Cambridge, who, in 1838, was associated with John Mason Neale, and with the Irish antiquary, Thomas Crofton Croker, in founding the Camden society. The society was founded in honour of William Camden, author of *Britannia* (1586); and it had for its purpose the printing of books and documents connected with the early civil, ecclesiastical and literary history of the British empire. Wright was further associated, in 1840, with Croker, and with Alexander Dyce, J. O. Halliwell(-Phillipps) and John Payne Collier, in founding the Percy society for publishing old ballads and lyrical pieces so named in memory of Thomas Percy, bishop of Dromore, the first editor of *Reliques of English Poetry* (1765). Even in his undergraduate days, Wright was an eager explorer of historic manuscripts in the Cambridge libraries. In 1836, he published four volumes of *Early English Poetry*, and, two years later, *A Series of Original Letters*, illustrating the history of queen Elizabeth and her times. In 1840 he edited, with notes and glossary, *The Vision and Creed of Piers Plowman*, and, in 1842, produced his *Biographia Literaria of the Anglo-Saxon period*, comprising 'a rich mass of materials, arranged with taste and judgment.' This was followed, two years later, by his *Anecdota Literaria*, a collection of short poems in English, Latin and French, illustrating the literature and history of England in the thirteenth century. Among his many other works were essays on subjects connected with the literature, popular superstitions and history of England in the middle ages; a history of domestic manners and sentiments, and of caricature and grotesque in literature and art, besides editions of Chaucer, and of the romance of king Arthur and the knights of the Round Table.

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[1] For further publications, see bibliography.

[2] *Curiosities of Literature*, vol. III, p. 493, ed. 1866.

An Account of the Public Records was published in 1832 by Charles Purton Cooper, who also prepared a catalogue of the fine collection of old French law which he presented to the library of Lincoln's inn. The labours of John Bruce, as calendarer of state papers, and as editor for the Camden society (1838—68), are noticed elsewhere[1]. *Anecdotes and Traditions*, relating to early English history and literature, was published for the same society by William John Thoms, who founded *Notes and Queries* in 1849, and edited Stow's *Survey of London* in 1875.

In 1834 the Surtees society was founded in honour of Robert Surtees, author of a *History of Durham* published between 1816 and 1840. The purpose of the society was the publication of ancient manuscripts bearing on the history and topography of northern England. Among its active members were the brothers James and John Raine; canon Greenwell, who published several works connected with the antiquities of the county and bishopric of Durham; and George William Kitchin, late dean of Durham, who, in the early part of his career, had prepared the catalogue of the library of Christ Church, Oxford.

The ten years from 1834 to 1844 were, in a special sense, the age of the birth of book-clubs and book-societies. Thus, the Camden society, already mentioned, was founded in 1838; and the year 1840 saw the foundation of the Parker society, which had for its main object 'the reprinting, without abridgment, alteration, or omission, of the best works of the Fathers and early Writers of the Reformed Church, published... between the accession of Edward VI and the death of Elizabeth.' The fifty-three volumes published by the society ended with a general index in 1855. The Percy and Shakespeare societies were founded in the same year, and the Aelfric and Chetham societies in 1842. Of the last two, the former had for its object the publication of Old English and other documents illustrating the early state of England; the latter, the printing of 'remains, historical and literary, connected with the Palatine Counties of Lancaster and Chester.' The Caxton society, founded in 1844, aimed at bringing out works 'illustrative of the history and miscellaneous literature of the Middle Ages.' The Sydenham society, founded in memory of the English physician Thomas Sydenham, lasted from 1844 to 1858, when it was succeeded by the New Sydenham society. The Hakluyt society, for printing rare and unpublished voyages and travels, was founded in 1846; the Early English Text society in 1864; the Ballad and the Chaucer society in 1868; the Harleian in 1869; the Wyclif in 1882; the Oxford Historical society in 1882; the Selden society, for publishing ancient legal records, in 1887; the London Bibliographical society and the Viking club in 1892; and the Navy records society in 1897. The Scottish book-clubs will be duly mentioned in the sequel[1]. One of the most generous contributors to the Scottish, as well as the English, book-clubs of the middle of the nineteenth century, was the scholarly and accomplished bibliographer, Beriah Botfield[2].

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[1] Cf. vol. xiv.

A project for a *Corpus Historicum* of early English history was formed by Henry Petrie, keeper of the records in the Tower. One large volume was published in 1848, with a preface by Sir Thomas Duffus Hardy, who had been trained under Petrie, and had already edited the *Close Rolls*, the *Patent Rolls*, the *Rotuli de oblatis et finibus*, the *Rotuli Normanniae*, the *Chester Rolls*, the *Liberate Rolls* and *Modus Tenendi Parliamentum* (1846). His *Descriptive catalogue of materials relating to the history of Great Britain and Ireland* filled three volumes. He edited William of Malmesbury, continued John Le Neve's *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae*, compiled an English syllabus of documents in Rymer's *Foedera* and wrote memoirs of Henry Bickersteth, Lord Langdale.

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[1] P. 358 *infra*.

[2] For his own contributions, see p. 515 *infra*.

Lord Langdale was succeeded as master of the rolls by Sir John Romilly, who held office from 1851 to 1873. It was under his authority that the celebrated *Rolls* series came into being. Early in the nineteenth century, at a meeting held at Spencer house, it had been resolved to recommend the publication of a complete collection of the sources of English history to the age of the reformation. Henry Petrie had drawn up a scheme for the approval of the government, and had been subsequently appointed editor of the proposed series. But the standard which he had set up was unduly high, and the scheme had been left in abeyance by his death. However, in November 1856, Joseph Stevenson, the archivist, who had been sub-commissioner of public records from 1834 to 1839, brought the subject under the consideration of the lords of the treasury. His representations were referred to the master of the rolls, who, on 26 January 1857, submitted proposals for the publication of a series entitled *Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland from the Invasion of the Romans to the Reign of Henry VIII.* The proposals were adopted, and the publication of the proposed series was authorised under certain conditions: (1) that the works selected should be published without mutilation or abridgment; (2) that the text should be formed on a collation of the best manuscripts; and (3) that the editor should give an account of the manuscripts used by him, a brief notice of the age in which the author wrote, and an explanation of any chronological difficulties. This enterprise has done more towards supplying a sound foundation for an accurate knowledge of medieval history than all preceding efforts put together[1].

Among the many literary antiquaries who made their mark as editors of some of the volumes in this great series may be mentioned John Sherren Brewer, Henry Richards Luard and (above all) James Gairdner. The *Historia Minor* of Matthew Paris was edited for the *Rolls* series in 1866—9 by Sir Frederic Madden, head of the department of MSS in the British Museum from 1837 to 1866. He also edited Layamon's *Brut* in 1847, and Silvestre's *Universal Palaeography*, three years later. Three volumes of the *Chronica Monasterii de Melsa*, in the *Rolls* series, and four volumes of facsimiles of Old English charters, from 672 to the conquest, were edited by Sir Edward Bond, who was principal librarian of the British Museum from 1878 to 1888. In 1873, he took part in founding the Palaeographical society in conjunction with his successor in the office of principal librarian. A transcript of *The Register of the Company of Stationers of London*, from 1554 to 1640, was published in 1875 by Edward Arber, who also edited *The Term Catalogues*, the seven volumes entitled *An English Garner*, *The English Scholar's Library* and the handy series issued under the title *English Reprints*.

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[1] Cf. Gardiner and Mullinger's *Introduction to the Study of English History* (1881), pp. 219 f. See, also, *post*, vol. xiv.

The biographical and historical antiquities of Cambridge were the field of research selected by Charles Henry Cooper, for many years town clerk of Cambridge. His minute and painstaking *Annals of Cambridge* appeared in four volumes in 1842—53, while a fifth volume bringing the work down to 1850—6, with an index to the whole, was added in 1908. The two volumes of his *Athenae Cantabrigienses*, published in 1858 and 1861, supplied materials for the lives of a large number of graduates of the university, the first and second volumes including those who died from 1500 to 1585, and from 1586 to 1609, respectively. The last work which he produced in his lifetime was *Memorials of Cambridge*, illustrated by Le Keux and Robert Farren. His *Memoir of Margaret Countess of Richmond and Derby* was edited in 1874 by John Mayor, who appears to have tacitly contributed more than half of the contents of the volume. In the course of an obituary notice, written on 21 March 1866, the day of the Cambridge antiquary's death, Mayor said of Cooper:

> It was because he clung with fond reverence to our 'Sparta,' whose every stone spoke to him of struggles and sacrifices and noble memories, that he 'adorned' it as no gownsman has done.

Sir Alexander Boswell, son of the biographer of Dr Johnson, became a member of the Roxburghe club in 1819, and set the example of printing the kind of books afterwards promulgated with much success by Scottish book-clubs. In 1816—18 he printed, at his private press at Auchinleck, works such as Churchyard's *Myrrour of man*, and George Whetstone's *Remembraunce of the Life of Sir Nicolas Bacon*. The greatest of the record-scholars produced by Scotland was Thomas Thomson, principal clerk of session from 1828 to 1852. Sir Walter Scott says of him in a letter to George Ellis: 'He understands more of old books, old laws, and old history, than any man in Scotland.' He edited *The Scots Acts* and other documents for the Record commission, but, by reason of either fastidiousness or indolence, he never prepared the introductory volume, for which he had during many years collected materials. The publication of *Popular Ballads and Songs, from tradition, manuscripts and scarce editions*, by

Robert Jamieson, in Edinburgh, in 1806, was described by Scott as having 'opened a new discovery respecting the original source of the Scottish Ballads.'[1] The author was afterwards associated with Henry Weber and Scott in *Illustrations of Northern Antiquities* (1814).

Sir Walter Scott was the first president of the Bannatyne club, founded in 1823 in memory of George Bannatyne, who wrote out in 1568 a vast collection of Scottish poems in a folio volume of 800 pages, now preserved in the Advocates' library, in Edinburgh[2]. Scott was president of the club until his death in 1832; two years later, the Abbotsford club was founded in his memory, for printing and publishing historical works connected with his writings, and twenty-five works were thus produced from 1835 to 1864[3]. Scott's place as president of the Bannatyne club was filled for the next twenty years by Thomas Thomson, mentioned above. The first and only secretary, from its inauguration in 1823 to its dissolution in 1861, was David Laing.

> 'It was a remarkable trio,' says David Murray in his monograph on Laing: 'they were the three men of the day most conversant with the literature of Scotland; each an accomplished antiquary...; all were distinguished in sagacity, shrewdness, and geniality; but Thomson lacked the exactness, method, energy, and business capacity of the other two[4].'

Laing, who was a learned bookseller and, from 1837 to his death in 1878, keeper of the library of the Writers to the Signet, Edinburgh, edited a large number of works of Scottish poetry and prose[5].

One of Laing's contemporaries, James Maidment, a Londoner who spent a large part of his life in Edinburgh, printed some rare tracts on the history and antiquities of Scotland (1822), and edited works for the Bannatyne, Maitland, Abbotsford and Hunterian clubs, as well as for the Spottiswoode society. Of these, the Maitland club, founded at Glasgow in 1828, for the publication of works illustrating the antiquities, history and literature of Scotland, produced seventy-five volumes, in little more than thirty years, while the Spottiswoode society, founded in memory of John Spottiswoode, archbishop of St Andrews, published his *History of the Church and State of Scotland* (1655 f.) in 1851. On the other side, the presbyterian *History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland from Restoration to Revolution*, written by Robert Wodrow, was published in 1828—30. The Wodrow society was founded in his honour at Edinburgh in 1841, and continued to flourish until about 1850, as an organisation mainly devoted to the history of presbyterianism. In the *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanae*, a work of wonderful accuracy and completeness, Hew Scott supplied a list (with biographical details) of the ministers of every parish in Scotland from the reformation to 1871. The Scottish text society was founded in 1882.

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[1] 'Introductory Remarks on Popular Poetry,' p. 549*b* of *Poetical Works*, ed. 1865.

[2] The entire text of the manuscript was issued by the Hunterian club, founded in Glasgow in 1871 for reproducing the works of Scottish writers of the Elizabethan age; it continued its activity until 1902.

[3] List in Terry, C. S., *Catalogue of publications of Scottish Historical Societies and kindred Clubs* (Glasgow, 1909).

[4] David Murray, 'David Laing, Antiquary and Bibliographer,' in *The Scottish Historical Review*, July 1914; separately printed in 1915.

[5] See bibliography.

The editorial work that had been left unfinished by the dilatory and fastidious Thomas Thomson was taken up after his death by Cosmo Innes, a man of singular charm and geniality, who filled the chair of constitutional law in Edinburgh from 1846 to his death in 1874. His style was lucid and engaging, and the object of his latest publication, *Lectures on Scotch legal antiquities*, was 'to lead the student of law from the daily practice of his profession to the historical and archaeological conditions connected with its technicalities.'[1] He also did a vast amount of work for the Bannatyne, Maitland and Spalding clubs. This last, so named after John Spalding, of Aberdeen (*fl.* 1650), author of *The History of... Scotland...from* 1624 *to* 1645, was founded, in 1839, for publishing the historical, genealogical, topographical and literary remains of the north-east counties of Scotland. Dissolved in 1870, it was revived as the New Spalding club in 1886. One of the principal founders of the original club was Joseph Robertson, who edited eight of its thirty-eight volumes. Robertson, whose comparatively short life of fifty-six years was outspanned by that of Cosmo Innes. was one of the most erudite and accurate of the antiquaries of Scotland. He was curator of the historical department of the Edinburgh Register house from 1853 to his death in 1866, and edited the *Statuta Ecclesiae Scoticanae* (1864), and many other volumes for the above-mentioned clubs, notably *Illustrations of the Topography and Antiquities of the Shires of Aberdeen and Banff* (1843—62).

'It is in the Scotch book-clubs,' says John Hill Burton, in his *Book-Hunter*, 'that Joseph Robertson has had the opportunity of exercising those subtle powers of investigation and critical acumen, peculiarly his own, which have had a perceptible and substantial effect in raising archaeology out of that quackish repute which it had long to endure under the name of antiquarianism.'[1]

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[1] *The Athenaeum*, no. 2358.

Sir Archibald Campbell Lawrie, before becoming a judge in Ceylon from 1892 to 1901, produced admirable examples of antiquarian work in his *Early Scottish Charters prior to* 1153, and in his *Annals of Malcolm and William*. His *Index to the Scots Acts* is an enormous folio, methodically arranged and practically forming an index to the history of Scotland.

In Ireland, Thomas Crofton Croker's *Researches in the South of Ireland* (1824) were followed by his *Fairy Legends and Traditions*, his *Legends of the Lakes*, and his *Popular Songs* (1839). John O'Donovan, who has been described as 'probably the greatest native Irish scholar who ever lived,' obtained an appointment in the Record office in 1826 and in the ordnance survey in 1829, and devoted his whole life to the elucidation of Irish history, topography and antiquities. Besides providing a *Grammar of the Irish Language* (1845), he ably edited and annotated a series of important texts, culminating in his monumental edition of *The Annals of... the Four Masters* (1848—51). The rest of his life was spent on the preliminary labours required for the herculean task of editing *The Ancient Laws of Ireland*[2]. His colleague in the ordnance survey, and his connection by marriage, Eugene O'Curry, was professor of Irish history and archaeology in the catholic university of Ireland. O'Curry's lectures entitled *Manuscript Materials for Ancient Irish History*, and *Manners and Customs of the Irish*, are 'still indispensable to all serious students of the past of Ireland.'[3]

Sir Samuel Ferguson, whose eminent services to Irish antiquities were recognised by his appointment in 1867 as the first deputy-keeper of the public records of Ireland, was knighted eleven years later for his successful reorganisation of the records department. As an Irish poet, he aimed at embodying in modern poetry the old Irish tales of heroes and saints and histories of places. His *Ogham inscriptions in Ireland, Wales, and Scotland* was edited in 1887 by Lady Ferguson. James Henthorn Todd, who became librarian of Trinity college, Dublin, in 1852, classified the manuscripts and compiled a catalogue, founded the Archaeological society in 1840, acted as its secretary and contributed to its publications and, finally, published his masterpiece, *St Patrick, Apostle of Ireland* (1864). William Reeves, who ultimately became bishop of Down, Connor and Dromore, published *Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down and Connor* in 1847, and, ten years later, elaborately edited for the Irish Archaeological and Celtic society, and for the Bannatyne club, *The Life of St Columba by Adamnan.* The Irish Archaeological society, founded in 1840, has had for its occasional collaborators several clubs of kindred objects, the Ossianic, the Iona and the Celtic. Of these, the Iona was founded in 1833, while the Celtic, founded in 1845, was merged in the Irish Archaeological society in 1853.

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[1] *The Book-Hunter* (1862); 'Some Book-Club Men.'

[2] Cf. Macalister, R. A. S., in *The Journal of the Ivernian Society*, vol. v (1912—13), pp. 31, 83 f.

[3] *Ibid.* p. 84.

Patrick Weston Joyce, principal of the training college, Dublin, was also a commissioner for the publication of *Ancient Laws of Ireland.* His love of Irish songs and of folk-music bore fruit in his *Ancient Irish Music* (1882), *Irish Music and Song* and *Irish Peasant Songs in the English Language* (1909). It also led him to many lonely places, where he collected half-forgotten local names, and thus prepared himself for the production of what may, probably, prove to be the most permanent of his works, *The Origin and History of Irish Names of Places* (1869, etc.). Of his various histories of Ireland, which were familiar as household words in his own land and among his countrymen in the colonies, the most important was *The Social History of Ancient Ireland* (1893)[1].

The historical antiquary, Sir John Thomas Gilbert, secretary to the public record office of Ireland from 1867 to 1875, wrote *Celtic Records and Historic Literature of Ireland* (1861), and edited *Historic and Municipal Documents of Ireland from the Archives of the City of Dublin* (1870), as well as *Facsimiles of the National Manuscripts of Ireland* (1874—1880). These last have been recognised as equally interesting in their historic, palaeographic and artistic aspects[2].

Whitley Stokes, who had studied Irish philology from an early age, returned to England in 1882 after a legal career of twenty years in India. He took part in editing a series of Irish and Celtic texts, and was associated with John Strachan in *Thesaurus Palaeo-Hibernicus* (1901—3). Robert Atkinson, successively

[1] An early copy of his *Old Celtic Romances* (1879), sent to Tennyson by Alfred Perceval Graves, inspired the poet laureate in *The Voyage of Maeldune.*

[2] Cf. vol. xiv, pp. 96, 328, 489, 568.

professor of Romance languages and of Sanskrit in Trinity college, Dublin, was also familiar with Tamil, Telegu, Hebrew, Persian, Arabic, Chinese, Celtic and Coptic. He edited the Norman-French poem, *La Vie de Seint Auban*, *The Book of Leinster*, *The Book of Ballymote*, a collection of pieces, prose and verse, in the Irish language, and a middle Irish work, *The Passions and Homilies from the Leabhar Breac* (1897). In the following year, he was joint editor of two volumes of the Irish *Liber Hymnorum*.

BIBLIOGRAPHERS

Bibliography has been defined as 'the systematic description and history of books, their authorship, publication, editions, etc.' It is only the handmaid of literature; it cannot be identified with literature any more than the bibliographer (as such) can be regarded as an author. But, although bibliography has only an ancillary position, it has, nevertheless, a lofty aim. The bibliographer aims at completeness; he dares not make any invidious selection; of his domain, it may be said, as of the grave, that 'the small and great are there'; and works of comparatively slight importance have an undoubted right to his recognition. In fact, the only way in which he can conscientiously escape from this obligation is by labelling his list a 'select bibliography.' The author, on the other hand, must always be making a selection out of all the possible words which he may use; and, against breaking this law of selection, he is sufficiently warned by the proverb: *tout dire est rien dire*. Sometimes, however, a bibliographer may produce a work which may rank as literature. A Dibdin may write a romance on bibliomania, and an Andrew Lang, who himself describes bibliography as 'the quaint *duenna* of literature,' may discourse on it with all his wonted charm; but bibliographers, as such, are not authors, and it is only because of their loyal services to letters that they can claim a place in these pages.

The importance of a first-hand knowledge of books has been recognised by all bibliographers worthy of the name. It was the leading principle which guided Joseph Ames, a native of Yarmouth and a prosperous inhabitant of Wapping, in preparing the materials for his account of printing in England from 1471 to 1600. Discarding printed lists, and resorting to the title-pages of the books themselves, he also secured the direct cooperation of others in gathering information respecting the 215 English printers with whom he proposed to deal. He thus succeeded in producing his *Typographical Antiquities* (1749).

One of the first of English bibliographers, both in order of time and in talent, was Samuel Paterson, bookseller and auctioneer. We are told that 'his talent at cataloguizing was unrivalled'; and that 'perhaps we never had a bookseller who knew so much of the contents of books generally.' We also learn that his catalogues were masterly, and, some of them, perfect models of their kind. He was on terms of intimacy with his older contemporary, Dr Johnson, who has himself a fair claim to be regarded as a bibliographer. He took part in cataloguing the Harleian library in 1742. In the preface to this work he observes that 'by means of Catalogues only can it be known, what has been written on every part of Learning.' 'The philosopher's curiosity,' he adds elsewhere, 'may be influenced by a catalogue of the works of Boyle or of Bacon, as Themistocles was kept awake by the trophies of Miltiades.'[1] Johnson, as he says of Pope, 'certainly was, in his early life, a man of great literary curiosity'; and he understood the whims and foibles of the bibliophile and collector. 'In the purchase of old books,' he remarks, 'let me recommend to you to inquire with great caution whether they are perfect.'[2] He approved of the famous collection of editions of Horace by James Douglas, whose catalogue was ultimately published in 1739; and he adds: 'Every man should try to collect one book in that manner, and present it to a public library.'[3]

William Beloe, a pupil of Samuel Parr, and a graduate of Corpus Christi college, Cambridge, produced, in 1806—12, six volumes entitled *Anecdotes of Literature and Scarce Books*, in which he had the advantage of having a large number of rare works placed at his service by many eminent owners of libraries. Beloe's *Sexagenarian*, published in two volumes after his death, contains anecdotes of the author's literary contemporaries; but the notices of Porson are known to be inaccurate[4]. *Bibliographia Poetica*, a catalogue of English poets of the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries, with a short account of their works, was published by Joseph Ritson in 1802. It was severely handled by Sir Samuel Egerton Brydges in his *Censura Literaria*. In allusion to Ritson's abusive, yet often just, *Observations* on Warton's *History of English Poetry*, he adds that, 'above all men, the late Laureat, whom this pitiable critic has loaded with the coarsest epithets, has taught us what use to make of dark and forgotten materials.'[1] Ritson's *Select Collection of English Songs* (1783 and 1813) won the praise of Sir Walter Scott, who, however, describes his *Collection of all the Songs etc. on Robin Hood* (1795, etc.), as a notable illustration of the excellences and defects of his system[2]. He was a laborious and accurate investigator, but there was an almost morbid bitterness in his criticisms of other men's labours. His place in the literary world is thus summed up in *The Pursuits of Literature*:

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[1] *The Adventurer*, no. 81.

[2] Croker's edn of *Boswell*, vol. III, p. 63.

[3] *Ibid.* vol. VIII, p. 277; cf. David Murray's *Bibliography: its Scope and Methods*, Glasgow, 1915, pp. 3, 7, 8, 53, 54.

[4] Many passages were omitted in the second edition published in 1818.

> In Theron's form, mark Ritson next contend;
> Fierce, meagre, pale, no commentator's friend[3].

Scott, in his song *One Volume More*, calls him 'as bitter as gall, and as sharp as a razor.' His critical powers were, however, well applied in his detection and exposure of the Ireland forgeries in 1795.

Sir Samuel Egerton Brydges, 'a name to all the book-tribe dear,' produced, in the ten volumes of his *Censura Literaria*, of 1805—9 and 1815, 'titles, abstracts, and opinions of OLD ENGLISH BOOKS.' He also published *The British Bibliographer* (1810—14), and *Restituta; or Titles, Extracts, and Characters of* OLD BOOKS *in English Literature Revived* (1814—16). He printed a large number of rare Elizabethan texts at the private press of his son, Lee priory, near Canterbury.

A literary interest of a wide range is represented by the discursive works of Isaac D'Israeli, entitled *Curiosities* and *Amenities of Literature*, and *Calamities* and *Quarrels of Authors. Curiosities of Literature* begins with essays on libraries and on bibliomania, and ends with the 'Life and Habits of a Literary Antiquary'; it also includes a passage, to our present purpose, in the chapter on the 'Bibliognoste':

> Many secrets we discover in bibliography.... Bibliography will show what has been done, and suggest to our invention what is wanted. Many have often protracted their journey in a road which has already been worn out by the wheels which had traversed it: bibliography unrolls the whole map of the country we propose travelling over—the post-roads and the by-paths.

Of *Calamities of Authors* it was said by Southey:

> The matter is as amusing as any lover of light reading can desire, and of such a desultory kind that a comment might easily be made as extensive as the text[4].

The second series of *Curiosities* was published in 1823; and, ten years later, Allan Cunningham said of these works in general that, 'while they shed abundance of light on the character and condition of literary men, and show us the state of genius in this land, they have all the attractions, for general readers, of the best romances.'[1]

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[1] Vol. I (1805), p. 55.

[2] See Scott's introductory remarks to his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, p. 549 *a* of *Poetical Works*, ed. 1865.

[3] [Mathias, T. J.] See Dialogue I, ll. 245 f.

[4] *The Quarterly Review*, vol. VIII (1812), p. 93.

Among collectors of books a prominent place must be assigned to the duke of Roxburghe, whose books were ultimately sold in 10,120 lots on 18 May 1812, and on forty-five subsequent days. The excitement then produced by the competition between Lord Spencer and the future duke of Marlborough for the Valdarfer Boccaccio, printed at Venice in 1471, led to the formation of the Roxburghe club, with Lord Spencer as president and Dibdin as secretary. Much literary work of high value was accomplished by this club, when it had outgrown the pedantries in which it had been reared, and had come under the fostering care of the scholarly Beriah Botfield[2], and had secured the services of men like Sir Frederic Madden, and Thomas Wright. In 1819 the duke of Marlborough's books were sold and the Boccaccio was now secured by Lord Spencer (who died in 1832), and thus passed, with the rest of the Althorp collection, into the hands of Mrs Rylands in 1892, and into the John Rylands library at Manchester, founded by her in 1899.

150,000 volumes were collected by Richard Heber, the half-brother of bishop Reginald Heber, at a total expense of more than £100,000, and were sold in 1834—7 for not much more than half that sum. From his very childhood he was an eager book-collector; and, in his maturer years, as library after library was sold, he added to his stores the choicest treasures from the shelves of great collectors such as Richard Farmer, George Steevens, the duke of Roxburghe, Benjamin Heath, Malone and Sir Mark Masterman Sykes. On hearing that a curious book was for sale, he would himself enter a mail-coach and travel three, four, or five hundred miles to obtain it, fearful to entrust his commission to a letter. He had a library at Hodnet, a second in Pimlico, a third in Westminster, besides those at Oxford, Paris, Antwerp, Brussels, Ghent and other places in the Low Countries, and in Germany[3]. Heber knew his books, and was an expert bibliographer. He was the 'Atticus' of Dibdin's *Bibliomania*, and the friend of Scott, who has commemorated him in the introduction to the sixth canto of

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[1] *Biographical and Critical History of British Literature of the last Fifty Years*, Paris, 1834, p. 241, reprinted from *The Athenaeum*, 14 December 1833, p. 851.

[2] See *ante*, p. 355.

[3] *The Gentleman's Magazine*, January 1834.

Marmion. He was also a generous lender of rare volumes to needy scholars and black-letter editors.

In 1809 John Ferriar, of Manchester, who, in his *Illustrations of Sterne*, 'has traced our author through the hidden sources whence he borrowed most of his striking and peculiar expressions,'[1] addressed to Richard Heber a poetical epistle entitled *Bibliomania*, large portions of which are quoted by Dibdin, who borrowed the name as the title of his own amusing and instructive romance. Here is one of these quotations:

> At ev'ry auction, bent on fresh supplies,
> He cons his catalogue with anxious eyes:
> Where'er the slim Italics mark the page,
> *Curious and rare* his ardent mind engage. (l. 29)

It was in 1802 that Thomas Frognall Dibdin published the first edition of his *Introduction to the Greek and Latin Classics.* This was followed, in 1809, by the first issue of his *Bibliomania*, a small octavo volume of 87 pages, an enlarged edition of which appeared in 1811, with *A Bibliographical Romance* added to the former title, while a third edition, that of 1842, includes a key to the several characters in the story. On receiving a copy of the second edition, Isaac D'Israeli wrote to the author: 'I have not yet recovered from the delightful delirium into which your *Bibliomania* has completely thrown me.' After fully describing the various symptoms of the form of madness known as bibliomania, the author suggests several cures for the disease, the fifth and last being the study of bibliography.

The first edition of Dibdin's *Bibliomania* was followed by the four volumes of his enlarged edition (1810—19) of Ames's *Typographical Antiquities*, already mentioned[2]. Dibdin was librarian to Lord Spencer, at Althorp, and, in that capacity, prepared *Bibliotheca Spenceriana.* The four volumes of this catalogue, published in 1814, were soon followed by a supplement in 1815, by the two volumes entitled *Aedes Althorpianae*, being a description of the house and its artistic treasures (1822), and, finally, by a seventh volume, containing the catalogue of the Cassano library. The author, in reviewing the result of his endeavours, has the satisfaction of adding:

> I have done every thing in my power to establish, on a firm foundation, the celebrity of a library of which the remembrance can only perish with every other record of individual fame.

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[1] See Scott's *Prefatory Memoir to Sterne* in John Ballantyne's *The Novelist's Library*, vol. v (1823), pp. xvii f.

[2] *Ante*, p. 362.

Of the three royal octavo volumes entitled *The Bibliographical Decameron, or Ten Days' Pleasant Discourse upon illuminated Manuscripts, and subjects connected with Early Engraving, Topography, and Bibliography* (1817), Isaac D'Israeli wrote: 'The volumes not only exceed my expectation, but even my imagination.' Overtures were made for the re-publication of this beautifully illustrated work in France; but they were too late. The costly woodcuts, which had been executed for its production, had already been purposely destroyed by Dibdin and his friends, who had used them to feed the fire on a convivial occasion. In 1821 Dibdin published his *Bibliographical, Antiquarian, and Picturesque Tour in France and Germany.* Scott welcomed this 'splendid work' as 'one of the most handsome which ever came from the British Press.' Dibdin's *Library Companion* (1824) has been severely criticised by some, but has been more justly regarded by others as a work of considerable value. It was followed in 1827 by the fourth edition of his *Introduction to the Greek and Latin Classics,* and by an anonymous pamphlet entitled *Bibliophobia*: 'Remarks on the present languid and depressed state of Literature and the Book Trade' (1831), an entertaining, but, in some respects, melancholy work. His *Reminiscences of a Literary Life,* 'a store-house of biographical and bibliographical anecdote,' appeared in 1836, succeeded in 1838 by his *Bibliographical, Antiquarian, and Picturesque Tour in the Northern Counties of England,* a handsome work, but inferior to that on his tour in France and Germany. Dibdin must have been well content with the tribute paid him by Scott for the charm with which he had invested the dry details of bibliography:

> You have contrived to strew flowers over a path which, in other hands, would have proved a very dull one; and all *Bibliomanes* must remember you long, as he (*sic*) who first united their antiquarian details with good-humoured raillery and cheerfulness.

The library of the duke of Sussex was catalogued in two splendid volumes (1827—39) by Thomas Joseph Pettigrew, who, apart from his publications on the history of medicine, produced in 1849 a *Life of Lord Nelson,* including upwards of six hundred letters and documents, then published for the first time. The keeper of the Lambeth manuscripts from 1837 to 1848 was Samuel Roffey Maitland, who published, in 1843, a list of some of the early printed books in that library, and, in 1845, an index of the English books printed before 1600. His historical productions are noticed elsewhere[1].

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[1] See vol. xiv.

Memoirs of Libraries, together with a practical hand-book of library economy, was published in 1859 by Edward Edwards, who subsequently wrote *Lives of the Founders of the British Museum* (1870). The plan of the great reading-room of that Museum was first formed by Antonio (afterwards Sir Anthony) Panizzi, keeper of the printed books from 1837, and chief librarian from 1856 to 1866. In addition to many other public services, it was owing to Panizzi's personal influence that, in 1846, the bequest of the Grenville library was obtained for the Museum.

Two bibliographical works of the highest importance were produced by a London bookseller, William Thomas Lowndes: (1) the four volumes of *The Bibliographer's Manual of English Literature,* 'containing an account of rare, curious, and useful books relating to Great Britain and Ireland, from the invention of printing, with bibliographical and critical notices, etc.,' the first systematic work of the kind published in England (1834); and (2) *The British Librarian,* or 'book-collector's guide to the formation of a library' (parts 1—11, 1839). *The Bibliographer's Manual* was enlarged, with revisions and corrections, and with interesting prefatory notes, in 1857—8, etc., by Henry George Bohn, whose own *magnum opus* was the *Guinea Catalogue* of old books (1841), filling nearly 2000 pages and describing 300,000 volumes. Among Bohn's many other undertakings was *The Antiquarian Library* of thirty-five volumes, including (apart from historical works of earlier date) George Ellis's *Specimens of Early English Metrical Romances,* Thomas Keightley's *Fairy Mythology,* Mallet's *Northern Antiquities* and Benjamin Thorpe's *Yule-tide Stories.* Bohn's *Guinea Catalogue,* vast as it was, was surpassed in size, though not in quality or character, by the seven volumes of Bernard Quaritch's *General Catalogue of Old Books and MSS* (1887—9; index, 1892).

A bibliographical and critical account of the rarest books in the English language was supplied in the *Notes on rare English Books,* published in 1865 by John Payne Collier, who also printed *Extracts from the Registers of the Stationers' Company for* 1555—70, and edited *The Roxburghe Ballads,* as well as several works for the Camden, Percy and Shakespeare societies, and the two volumes entitled *Shakespeare's Library* (1843). In 1849 he published a large number of emendations of the text of Shakespeare from the 'Perkins folio,' which he presented to the duke of Devonshire, after whose death it was deposited in the British Museum in 1859, with the result that the marginal corrections were proved to be modern fabrications. A catalogue of the MSS of the Chetham library, in Manchester, was produced in 1841—2 by James Orchard Halliwell(-Phillipps), who edited many works for the Camden, Percy and Shakespeare societies, and produced a magnificent edition of Shakespeare in twenty folio volumes, and facsimiles of the Shakespeare quartos. He also wrote several important works on the life of the poet, besides arranging and describing the archives of Stratford-on-Avon, and compiling *A Dictionary of Archaic and Provincial Words*, and *A Dictionary of Old English Plays*.

Richard Copley Christie[1] bequeathed to the university of Manchester a library rich in the literature of the revival of learning. Walter Arthur Copinger, long Christie's colleague at Manchester and, like him, a barrister in practice there, founded, in 1892, the London Bibliographical society, printed in the same year his *Incunabula Biblica* and published in 1895—8 his important supplement to Hain's *Repertorium Bibliographicum*, in which 6832 works printed in the fifteenth century were added to the 16,311 registered by Hain. Three thousand *incunabula* (or early printed books) in the Bodleian were catalogued in 1891—3 by Robert Proctor, who included notes upon these in his *Index of Early Printed Books in the British Museum* (1898). He also prepared for the Bibliographical society in 1900 an illustrated monograph entitled *The Printing of Greek in the Fifteenth Century*. This able bibliographer met with a mysterious end in the Tyrol in 1903, and his *Bibliographical Essays*, which everywhere reveal the wide knowledge of an expert, were collected two years later. A useful *Register of National Bibliography* was produced in two volumes in 1905 by William Prideaux Courtney.

A remarkable knowledge of bibliography was possessed by Henry Bradshaw, librarian of the Cambridge university library from 1867 to 1886. His 'Memoranda,' which are of special interest as indicating the processes by which advances in knowledge are made, are included in the *Collected Papers* published in 1889. A society for publishing rare liturgical tracts was founded in his memory in the following year. The book rarities in the university of Cambridge were reviewed with enthusiasm in 1829 by Charles Henry Hartshorne, who gives a complete list of Capell's Shakespeariana in the library of Trinity college. The fifteenth century printed books, and the English books printed before 1601, in Trinity college library, at Cambridge, were catalogued, in 1876 and 1885, by the librarian, Robert Sinker, who also wrote a popular monograph on the library. The early English printed books in the university library (1475 to 1640), and the MSS in the college libraries, have likewise been catalogued.

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[1] Cf. *ante*, p. 333.

Among the bibliographers specially associated with Scotland, Sir Walter Scott was undoubtedly a sound bibliographer. It was on a plan of his own that his library was catalogued by his secretary; and (as already observed) he was president of the Bannatyne club from its foundation to the day of his death[1]. But the first great bibliographer of Scotland was Robert Watt, of Glasgow, who published *A Catalogue of Medical Books* during his lifetime (in 1812), and left behind him the materials for his great *Bibliotheca Britannica, or a general Index to British and Foreign Literature*, published in four volumes at Edinburgh in 1824, the first two containing the alphabetical list of authors (with their works), and the third and fourth an alphabetical classification of subjects.

> 'Dr Watt,' writes Isaac D'Israeli, 'may serve as a mortifying example of the length of labour and the brevity of life. To this gigantic work the patient zeal of the writer had devoted twenty years; he had just arrived at the point of publication when death folded down his last page; the son who, during the last four years, had toiled under the direction of his father, was chosen to occupy his place. The work was in the progress of publication, when the son also died; and strangers now reap the fruits of their combined labours.'[2]

The work has been justly described as 'a remarkable performance, despite of all its imperfections, and one in which Watt's name will live for centuries to come.'[3]

A catalogue of the law books in the Advocates' library, Edinburgh, was produced in 1831 by David Irving, author of *Memoirs of... George Buchanan* and *Lives of Scotish Poets*, and of *The History of Scotish Poetry*. The bibliographical erudition of Sir William Hamilton, professor of logic and metaphysics in Edinburgh, is clearly shown in the notes to his published works, such as *Discussions on Philosophy and Literature* of 1852—3, and his posthumous *Lectures on Logic and Metaphysics*. Augustus de Morgan held that Hamilton was not a bibliographer: 'he knew nothing but the insides of books'; but he suggested that a list of the books quoted in Hamilton's lectures on logic would form a good bibliography of the subject[4]. The American editor of his *Philosophy* regarded 'his erudition, both in its extent and in its exactness,' as 'perfectly provoking'[1]; and a fellow-countryman, with all the instincts of a bibliographer, has more aptly said of him:

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[1] *Ante*, p. 358.

[2] *Literary Miscellanies*, p. 355, ed. 1867.

[3] *Enc. Brit.* vol. XXI, ed. 1860, p. 778.

[4] *Notes and Queries*, 1864, p. 102 (quoted in David Murray's *Bibliography*, p. 53).

> Summing up the thousands upon thousands of volumes upon all matters of human study and in many languages, which he has passed through his hands, you think he has merely dipped into them or skimmed them, or in some other shape put them to superficial use. You are wrong; he has found his way at once to the very heart of the living matter of each one; between it and him there are henceforth no secrets[2].

The Book-Hunter, a discursive volume describing the delights of book-collecting, was written by John Hill Burton, the publication of whose *History of Scotland* led to his appointment as historiographer royal for that country. A Scotsman who lived long in England, Andrew Lang, wrote a delightful volume, *The Library* (1881), besides discoursing on 'Elzevirs' and on 'Bibliomania in France' in his *Books and Bookmen* (1887).

A Dictionary of Anonymous and Pseudonymous Literature of Great Britain was published in 1882—8 by Samuel Halkett, keeper of the Advocates' library (of which he planned the catalogue), and John Laing, librarian of the New college, Edinburgh, author of the excellent catalogue of its library. The religious history of the sixteenth century was the special province of Thomas Graves Law, keeper of the Signet library, Edinburgh, from 1876 to 1904, whose *Collected Essays* appeared in the latter year[3]. Finally, a new catalogue of the Glasgow university library (with an excellent subject-index) has been prepared by William Purdie Dickson, honorary curator of the library, and papers on the bibliography of chemistry and technology have been written by John Ferguson, of Glasgow, author of *Bibliotheca Chemica* (1906), *Witchcraft Literature of Scotland*, and *Some Aspects of Bibliography* with a list of special bibliographies in the appendix (1907)[4].

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[1] Wight, O. W., transl. of Cousin's *History of Modern Philosophy*, vol. II, p. 335, 1854. Cf. De Quincey's *Essays*, vol. v, pp. 314 f., ed. Masson.

[2] Burton, John Hill, *The Book-Hunter*, pp. 77 f., ed. 1909.

[3] As to John Hill Burton, Andrew Lang and T. G. Law, see a later volume of this *History*.

[4] See, also, the bibliography of the present chapter.

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